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No. 196.



The color faded from the cheeks of the bride while the face of the bridegroom grew livid with rage.

Gentleman George:

OR,
PARLOR, PRISON, STAGE AND STREET.
A STRANGE ROMANCE OF NEW YORK LIFE.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN.

AUTHOR OF "THE MAN FROM TEXAS," "MAD DETECTIVE,"
"ROCKY MOUNTAIN BOY," "WOLF DEMON," "OVER-
LAND KIT," "RED WAZEPAN," "AGE OF
SNADES," "HEART OF FIRE," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

TWENTY-ONE YEARS AGO.

A STately mansion situated in the center of a park-like estate, near Sixty-first street, New York, in the year 1853.

At this time the Central Park had only been talked of, and houses were few and far between above Fifth street.

The shades of evening had come, and lights were flashing gayly from the windows of the mansion.

It was evident that some festive occasion was at hand, for carriage after carriage rolled in at the broad entrance-way and deposited loads of human freight—ladies decked in silks and satins, and gentlemen in the full dress of the time—at the door of the brilliantly illuminated house.

The best people of New York entered the wide portal of the stately mansion that night. It was no common occurrence that had called forth the leaders of "society."

Twenty-one years ago New York society was vastly different from what it is at the present time. The days of oil and shoddy had not then come, and millionaires did not spring up, like Aladdin's palace, in a single night.

Two scions of two old New York families were to become one that night. Money was to marry money, and "blood" was to ally itself to "blood."

The bride claimed descent from the old one-legged Governor of New Amsterdam, and the groom from the Patroons of Ulster County.

The richly-furnished parlors were crowded with guests. At eight the ceremony was to take place, and, as it lacked but a few minutes of the hour, the arrival of the minister was momentarily expected.

And while they waited for the coming of the minister, and showered congratulations upon the blue-eyed bride, whose fair, round face, all red and white, gave ample proof of her German descent, and upon the tall and handsome bridegroom, whose upright carriage and haughty air fully revealed that birth and breeding had not been wasted upon him, a strange scene was taking place in the carriage-way that led to the house.

A slender female form, clad in a plain dark dress, looking not unlike a lady's maid, had stolen up the carriage-way from the street, and,

halting within the shadow of the trees that lined the pathway, gazed earnestly toward the door of the mansion, from whence streamed a circle of light. And then she looked toward the open windows of the parlor, which fronted on the path. Through the curtains of lace she could look into the room; could see the fair young bride in her silken wedding dress, with the orange blossoms wreathed in her yellow hair, and the tall and handsome bridegroom in his suit of black.

Then pressing forward a step, still eagerly gazing, the light streaming from the windows fell upon her and revealed a little, simple, girlish face, brown-black eyes—that now are flashing wild with passion's fires—brown hair, drawn back from the low white forehead and simply braided, a slender figure, slight and graceful as the swaying willow branch. But now the girlish face was distorted with passion as she gazed upon the wedding-guests assembled within the mansion, and, as her eyes fell upon the tall and manly figure of the bridegroom, bitter, revengful words came from between her firm-set teeth; she clenched her little white hand and shook it with menace toward the gleesome throng within the house.

Under her arm the girl bore a heavy pasteboard box, in size about a foot wide by two feet long.

One of the servants coming to the door and looking down the carriage-way, evidently sent to see if he could hear the sound of the minister's carriage-wheels, interrupted the muttered words of the woman.

Stepping forward a pace or two, she called to the servant and beckoned him to approach. Somewhat astonished at the call, the man obeyed the summons.

"I've a present here for the bride," the girl said, smiling pleasantly in the face of the attendant; "it is to be a surprise for her. It's from Miss Van Curlaer, but she doesn't wish it known that she sent it. Will you have the kindness to take it in to the bride, and here's five dollars for your trouble. Give it to her so that she can open it before the guests, and be sure not to say any thing about who it comes from."

"Oh, certainly, Miss," replied the man, taking the pasteboard box under his arm, and slipping the gold-piece into his pocket with a great deal of cheerfulness; "I'll take it in to her right away, and you can depend upon my keeping a still tongue in my head."

"Give it to her at once, and be careful; it's very valuable," the girl said, with a charming smile.

"Yes, Miss; much obliged to you," and then the servant retraced his steps to the house, carrying the pasteboard box under his arm. It was quite weighty, and the man guessed at once that it contained some rare and costly ornament.

After giving the box into the hands of the servant the girl had turned and gone down the

carriage-way toward the gate, but, as the man entered the door, she turned suddenly, and, plunging into the shrubbery, rushed madly toward the house. From behind the shelter of a cluster of bushes she could gaze into the brilliantly lighted parlors and yet remain concealed from observation.

With glaring eyes and a rigid face she looked upon the happy wedding party.

The servant entered the parlor, bearing the box carefully under his arm, and, with a beaming smile upon his stolid face, approached the bride.

All the guests turned and looked in wonder.

"I beg your pardon, Miss," he said; "a young person has just brought this box for you, and says as how it's a surprise and that it is to be opened right away."

This strange announcement created considerable astonishment, but the bride, entering into the spirit of the jest, took the box into her own fair hands without a word and removed the cover.

The wedding guests crowded close around, and even the tall and handsome bridegroom came near, with a look of careless wonder upon his face.

The cover removed and the contents of the box exposed to view, an exclamation of surprise came from all. The color faded from the cheeks of the bride, while the face of the bridegroom grew livid with rage.

Within the box was an infant, fast asleep.

The guests looked at each other in wonder, while the servant who had brought the box gazed open-mouthed in supreme astonishment.

"Oh, dear!" cried the bride, in helpless amazement.

"This is a sorry jest!" exclaimed the groom, in hot rage.

"Take away the creature!" said the mother of the bride.

One person alone of all the company seemed not to wonder at the strange circumstance, and he was the father of the bridegroom.

Coolly, and as if regarding the affair only as a common matter, he bade the servant remove the infant.

"Some heartless woman, unable to rear her child, has taken advantage of our happy gathering here to-night to thrust her burden upon our charities, but there are plenty of poor-houses in the country without our having to trouble ourselves about this beggar's foundling. Take it away, John; carry it down to the nearest station-house and leave it there."

The servant obeyed the command, but, though the "surprise" had departed, yet the effect remained to cast a damper upon the spirits of that gay company.

Through the open window the words of the cold and haughty merchant-prince had come to the ears of the woman concealed behind the cluster of bushes.

A moment she glared into the room, and saw the servant depart with the babe, and then

down on both knees she dropped and lifted her thin, white hands to heaven, while her eyes flashed with demoniac fire.

"Oh, God in heaven, hear me curse this race! Let me live until I see them die, one by one, in speechless agony; curse the father—curse the son and the proud and haughty girl whom he will wed to-night—curse the child that bears his blood within its little veins, and whom he now permits to be given to the cold mercies of the world!"

The stars looked down and gleamed coldly as they listened to the passionate words.

Does the Great Ruler ever hear or heed the curses invoked by mortals?

CHAPTER II.

THE TEETH OF THE RATS.

OUT in the stream, with her head to the tide, lay the good ship Golden Dragon, one of the Liverpool liners.

On the first day of May, 1873, the Golden Dragon would leave her anchor up from the mud of the North river and turn her prow homeward toward the chalky cliffs of Old England.

The cargo was all on board; in the morning the crew would come, and then, farewell to New York bay.

Captain Drummond, commander of the Golden Dragon, had been to dinner with the agent of the line, and at nine o'clock in the evening, on the last day of April, he had been escorted down to the dock by a jovial party, and getting into the boat, had been pulled out to his ship.

The worthy Briton had "punished" considerable champagne, before and after dinner, and though his head was of the hardest texture, like to England's walls of oak, yet, as he ascended the side of his ship, and glanced upward at the sky, he saw more stars than were usually wont to shine there.

The first mate and two sailors were in charge of the ship; the rest of the crew had not yet come aboard. The captain exchanged a few words with the mate, and then, bidding his officer good-night, descended to his cabin and prepared to retire.

As the head of the worthy captain felt a little queer, he fixed himself a glass of brandy-and-soda—ever the favorite tipple of the male natives of the "tight little island"—and disporting it, tumbled into his berth.

Soon the captain was safe in the arms of "Murphy"—to "Irishize" the god of sleep.

How long he slept he knew not, when he was suddenly awakened by a dazzling light flashed upon his eyes. In astonishment he looked around him.

Four men, roughly clad, and wearing black masks over their faces, surrounded him. One held a bull's-eye lantern, so that the glare fell full upon his eyes, while another presented a cocked revolver at his head.

The other two midnight intruders were a few paces back of the first two; each carried a weapon in his hand.

At the first glance the captain of the Golden Dragon realized his position.

The "Rats of the River" had taken possession of his ship. Although he had never encountered the terrible river thieves before, though he had followed the sea, man and boy, for forty years, yet he had heard too often of the operations of the Rats, as the half-pirates were generally termed, not to recognize them at once.

Drummond understood at a glance that resistance was useless; what could one unarmed man do against four assailants, fully provided with weapons?

"Well, what can I do for you, gentlemen?" Drummond asked, coolly, finding that the masked men did not speak.

"We want a little information," said the man who held the revolver, to the head of the captain, and who was evidently the leader of the gang.

"Gentlemen, I must say that you really have such persuasive ways with you that I shall only be too glad to give you any information in my power," the Englishman said, coolly and calmly, yet inwardly chafing at his position.

"You are a sensible man, Captain Drummond," the leader of the masked men replied, with a light laugh. "I wish that it was our good fortune to always meet with such agreeable men as yourself to do business with. Of course you understand that we call upon you solely upon business."

"I presume so," the sailor said, "although I must remark that I do not understand what you can find on board of my ship that will be of value to you. I do not suppose that barrels of flour and such stuff will be of much use to gentlemen of your kidney."

"We won't trouble your flour, captain," the tall masked man said, laughing; "in fact, we won't trouble your cargo at all. We want the diamond jewelry that you are carrying over as a present to Mrs. Inglis. Myself and friends are altogether too good Americans to permit such valuable articles to go out of the country to adorn the wife of a foreign subject. Besides, the cannery Scotchman has money enough of his own to buy jewels for his wife."

The burly Englishman felt a cold perspiration break out all over him.

"Gentlemen, you are laboring under some great mistake," he cried, hastily.

"Captain Drummond, do not take the trouble to lie to us," the leader of the Rats said, slowly and sternly. "Let me convince you that you can not deceive us. You dined with Mr. Adam Duncan, at his house in Thirtieth street, to-day. After his wife and daughter retired from the table, and left you and your host to your wine, he produced a small packet, wrapped up in white paper and

securely sealed. This he intrusted to you, with instructions to give it into the hands of Mrs. Inglis, with his compliments, and at the same time he informed you that the packet contained a set of diamond jewelry valued at two thousand dollars.

The captain shared in astonishment, but did not attempt to reply.

"Just after dinner a party of Mr. Duncan's friends came in, and they all accompanied you to the dock. It was rather a lucky thing for you, captain, that you had an escort down," the robber said, reflectively, "or else we should have tried to relieve you of the diamond set on your way to the dock, and possibly we should have been compelled to have hurt you a little; but now we can arrange things without any trouble. Just hand over the articles, or tell us where they are, and we will depart instantly."

The Englishman's face flushed a deep red, and he set his thick lips resolutely together.

"Gentlemen, I don't want to be outdone in politeness, but I'll see you hanged before I speak a word to aid you in your purpose."

The Briton was game to the backbone.

The masked man laughed.

"We won't trouble you, captain, since it goes so hard. One of our boys kept his eyes on you when you stowed the packet away," he said. "You had a little too much wine on board, captain."

The leader motioned to one of the men, who took a bunch of keys from the pocket of the sailor's pantaloons, pulled out a little chest from under the berth, unlocked it and drew forth the white packet. The seaman groaned in rage.

Then, quickly as they had come, the masked men left the cabin.

The captain jumped into his pantaloons and rushed up to the deck, revolver in hand, mad with rage. There he found the mate and one of the sailors, securely bound; the other sailor had disappeared; evidently he had been in league with the robbers.

Afar off in the mist that rested on the surface of the water, the sailor could discern the dim outline of the boat of the thieves, rapidly vanishing in the gloom.

Drummond blazed away with his revolver after the boat, trusting to the sound of the shots to attract one of the Harbor Police-boats, and as it happened, one was passing close at hand just at that minute.

Pulling alongside, the police inquire the meaning of the disturbance. In a few words the captain explained what had occurred, and directed them as to the course taken by the robbers.

Bending to their oars, the police sent their boat spurring through the surface of the tide.

The masked men, dreaming not of pursuit, were pulling leisurely along, keeping a bright look-out ahead, paying but little attention to the water in their wake.

They had taken the masks from their faces, and pulling along in their working, Whitehall boat, seemed like a party of honest mechanics out for a row.

Before they had the slightest suspicion of danger, the police boat was in sight.

The measured dip of the oar-blades fell upon the ears of the thieves.

"It's the police, and they're after us!" cried their leader, "Gentleman George"; "pull, boys, or it's Sing-Sing and hard labor!"

Then came the chase under the stars. The police boat galloped slowly upon the Rats.

Coolly and carefully the leader of the thieves took aim with his revolver and fired. The howl of the police-boat sunk down with a stifled groan, and as the rest ceased their labor to spring to his assistance, the bow of the boat swung round with the tide, and the headway was lost.

With cries of rage the police discharged a few screeching shots at the Rats.

Twenty strokes and the thieves were hid in the mist, safe from pursuit; and then with a low groan, Gentleman George let go the tiller, and sunk fainting to the bottom of the boat. He had been hit by a revolver-ball.

CHAPTER III.

"THE WOMAN."

CHERRY street, near Market, by night; not a very pleasant locality, nor a safe one for a well-dressed stranger.

The hour of ten had just struck.

Underneath the light at the corner, leaning against the lamp-post, stood a burly, thick-set man, dressed plainly in dark clothes. He held a little cane in his hand, and was switching the leg of his pantaloons with it in a manner that betrayed decided traces of impatience, and from the way in which he looked up and down the street, every now and then, it was very evident that he was waiting for some one.

The burly man with the bushy brown beard, and the keen, gray eyes, was the senior partner of the firm of Beck and Bockton, private detectives.

Thomas Beck was pretty well known in New York city, and bore the reputation of being one of the shrewdest men in the business.

"Why on earth don't he come?" the detective muttered, impatiently. "I'm getting about tired of this; I'm not going to hold this lamp-post up much longer."

Then from the gloom of the night, up the street, from the direction of Pike street, came a dark figure.

The detective cast a piercing glance at the new-comer, and an exclamation of satisfaction came from his lips.

"That's my man!" he cried.

The stranger was a man of thirty-five or forty, dressed quite roughly, and yet there was a certain something in his face and figure which betrayed the gentleman despite the coarse garb he wore. He was about the medium height, slenderly built, and yet, to a close observer, the sinewy supple figure, with its easy carriage, would have given the impression of uncommon strength.

The face of the man was a bright olive in hue, smoothly shaven; a square-set face, with its broad, high forehead, prominent nose, massive jaw, and round, glittering black eyes; a face not unlike that of the first Napoleon.

It was now ten days or more since the "slime" of the East-side had first seen the dark face of the stranger. Dance-saloons and lodging-house alike had been visited by him. Not a haunt of misery and crime, from Peck Slip to Grand street that he had not penetrated.

At first his presence had caused much alarm among the "dangerous classes" along-shore; a stranger to them all, in the beginning he was looked upon as an officer in disguise. The birds of prey feared that some one of their number was "wanted," and they kept a wary watch upon the quiet, silent visitor.

Some bolder than the rest, entered into conversation with, and questioned the suspected man. And he, while apparently answering freely, revealed nothing. He merely said that he was a doctor, and to use the English phrase, was "down on his luck."

It was shrewdly conjectured that the man had got into trouble, in some way, and was keeping "shady" until the affair should blow over.

And so, in the very short space of ten days, the Doctor, as the stranger was popularly

termed, was pretty well known to the denizens of Cherry and Water streets.

"What luck?" asked the Doctor, abruptly, as he came up to the detective.

"Nary luck," replied the worthy Mr. Beck, laconically.

"The scent was a false one then?"

"Yes; the woman was an old hag of fifty. Didn't answer the description at all."

"Can you suggest any thing more?" the Doctor questioned, thoughtfully.

"Not at present," the detective answered. "The information that you received was evidently incorrect. There's no such woman and child as you described in any of the saloons round about here."

"It would seem so."

"Shall I still keep a look-out?" the detective asked. "I might stumble upon her accidentally, you know."

"Yes; I will call in and see you some time this week. Good-night." Then the Doctor turned abruptly and retraced his steps down the street.

"Well, he is a peculiar fellow," the detective remarked, communing with himself, as he stood for a moment in the glare of the light, watching the retreating figure of the dark-faced stranger.

And after making this observation the officer walked off up the street. When he came to the Bowery, he hesitated for a moment as if uncertain as to his course.

"Let me see," he queried; "it's almost too late to attend to any thing tonight; but I don't feel like going to bed. I might as well go up as far as the Fifth Avenue Hotel; there's just a chance that I might run across some night-bird there."

So the detective got on board a car, proceeded up town, and about eleven o'clock arrived in front of the hotel. He had come through Twenty-third street; and just as he stepped upon the curbstone, he came face to face with a portly, well-dressed gentleman.

"Good-evening, Mr. Bruyn," Beck said.

"Ah, Mr. Beck, you're the very man I wanted to see!" exclaimed the man, who was Nicholas Bruyn, the lawyer-millionaire, was a man of fifty—tall, portly and well preserved. Not a gray hair in his carefully-curled yellow locks, nor in his well-waxed, tawny mustache and imperial.

A lawyer by profession, and the sole descendant of one of the old patroon families, all the good things of this world had been strewn before him in rich profusion.

An able, active man, gifted with uncommon talents, and backed by a million of money, at an early age he had gone into politics, and few men in New York State had been more successful.

The Judge's ermine had been worn with skill and grace, and the name of Nicholas Bruyn had been more than once mentioned as that of a possible candidate for Governor of the Empire State.

Beck was all attention at the words of the ex-Judge.

"Any thing I can do for you, Mr. Bruyn?" he asked.

"Yes, I think that there is," Bruyn replied. "You are still in the detective line, I suppose?"

"Yes, sir."

"If you will have the kindness to walk down the street with me a little way, where we will not attract any attention I will explain."

The two proceeded down Twenty-third street until they came to a quiet spot beyond the hotel. There the lawyer halted.

"You undertake the prosecution of inquiries about certain parties for a consideration, I believe?" Bruyn said.

"Yes, sir."

"And the matter remains a profound secret between yourself and the party who desires the information?"

"Oh, of course, sir," the secret-service agent replied; "our business would go to the dogs if we didn't keep our mouths shut."

"I supposed that. I wish information about a certain party. You will find all the particulars noted down in this envelope. Spare no expense, and call upon me in my office in Wall street if you find any clue."

The lawyer put the envelope into the hands of the detective, bid him "good-night," and departed.

Beck opened the yellow covering, sauntered up to the nearest light and examined the paper inclosed in the cover.

Name—Celine Seaton.
Age—about forty-two.
Hair—brown.
Eyes—dark-brown.
Face—oval.
Complexion—light.
Figure—slender; about four feet ten in height. Small hands and feet.
Marks—a small mole on left cheek; two small moles on right arm just above the wrist, an inch or more apart.
Occupation—confidence-woman—probably.
Residence—not known.

When the detective finished reading this description, a low whistle of astonishment came from his lips. The description was not new to him.

Ten days before, the man who had simply said that he was to be called "Doctor," had requested the detective to search amid the vile dens of the East-side for a woman named Lina Aton, and had given a description that tallied exactly with that of Celine Seaton. It might only be a coincidence, but that two women should be marked by these moles in exactly the same place, was exceedingly strange.

"I'll go for her ag'in," said Mr. Beck, tersely.

CHAPTER IV.

MOLLY BAWN.

The dark-faced stranger proceeded on for awhile, and then slackened his pace and finally came to a dead halt as if uncertain which way to go.

"I suppose that I may as well give up the chase," he said, musingly; "yet I am sure that she is lurking somewhere in this neighborhood. Strange that after so many years she should suddenly appear. I could hardly believe my eyes when I met her on the Bowery, ten days ago, but I recognized her at once, for time has dealt lightly with her and she does not look five years older than in the days gone by. I traced her to the corner of Market and Cherry; and there I lost her. I think she discovered that she was being followed, and took measures to avoid pursuit. I wonder if she recognized me in turn. The world has evidently dealt hardly with her, for she was dressed very poorly. It makes me doubt whether there is such a thing as justice in this world when I see that this woman still lives." Bitter indeed was the tone in which the man spoke.

"And yet, who can tell whether the burden of life is not the heaviest cross that could be inflicted upon her?" he murmured after a moment's pause. "Wise judges are we poor humans of each other. I do not care for the woman—do not care whether she is living or dead—but the child. I can not forget the child, and I must know its fate. Since the detective has failed, I'll keep up the chase alone. Sooner or later I will find her, and then discover what I wish to know. The face of the child is ever before me."

The Doctor was standing in front of a squalid tenement house, and his meditations were suddenly and rudely arrested by the sound of angry words coming from the house.

"Go to the devil an' shake yourself, ye fox-headed Greek, ye!" yelled a man's voice, hoarse with rage and liquor combined.

"Whoop! I've me alone till I break her back, the baste!" cried a woman, evidently as much under the influence of liquor as the man who had spoken.

The Doctor, perceiving that a "ruction" was at hand, drew back a few steps and sought shelter in the shadow of a neighboring doorway.

Hardly had he taken up his position when the door of the tenement house opened suddenly and a half-grown girl, bare-headed and barefooted, fled into the street and ran for dear life.

From the entry-way came the cries of her assailants, but they did not attempt pursuit.

After a look into the street, the man and woman who had driven the girl out, gave vent to a torrent of curses to their apartments again.

The Doctor, who had recognized the fugitive as she passed him, came from the shelter of the doorway and proceeded up the street after her.

At the corner, ready to flee at the slightest sign of pursuit, the Doctor found the girl.

She did not attempt to run at his approach, for her sharp eyes, accustomed to the darkness, cat-like had discovered that he was no enemy.

"Are they comin' arter me?" she asked, eagerly, as the Doctor came up.

"No," he replied; "they have closed the door and gone back to their room."

Then, by the aid of the light of the street-lamp, shining down full upon the face and figure of the girl, he took a good look at her.

She was a wee little thing, clad in tattered garments, with a round, rosy face, though it was now sadly discolored with dirt. Her eyes were large, and a beautiful dark-blue in color. Her hair, bright-red in hue, curled in little tangled masses all over her head.

She looked as plump and healthy as a well-fed hen, and seemed too to be as active and as lively.

"They know that it ain't no use for them to try to catch me!" the little sprite observed confidently. "There ain't a boy in the street kin beat me runnin'; 'sides, they're both of 'em too drunk to catch a sick monkey to-night."

"What is the trouble?" the Doctor asked.

"They wanted to beat me, an' I ain't a-goin' to stand that any longer. I'm too big to be beat now!" the maid replied, indignantly.

"Why did they wish to beat you?"

"Because I told 'em I wasn't goin' out to beg for 'em any more. I've jest got sick of that kind of business, an' I'm goin' to quit," she said, decidedly. "They ain't any folks any way. They've always called me a beggar's baw, an' told how much it cost to keep me, an' now I'm jest a-goin' to paddle my own canoe, an' I'll go back to that barracks any more, an' if that old beast of a Greek dares to give me any of his chin-music, I'll jest throw a brick at him."

The girl's eyes flashed and she stamped her foot impatiently as she uttered the threat.

"What are you going to do for a living?" inquired the Doctor, kindly.

"I don't know," replied the young "Arab," a thoughtful expression upon her features.

"I think that I had better go to selling papers or something like that. I want a 'stake' to start with, though, 'cos I haven't got nary stamp now. That old Mickeyritter he alters goes through my clothes an' gobbles my stamps. I've jest got a good mind to lay for her some night, an' hit her with a brick, too. I'll do it sure when I get good an' ready."

"Oh, no; you mustn't do that," the Doctor said, very seriously; "that wouldn't be lady-like."

The girl looked at the speaker for a moment, opening her eyes wide in astonishment.

"Well, I ain't a lady," she at length retorted. "I'm only a little gutter-snipe."

"But you can make a lady of yourself if you will only try."

"Mebbe I kin," slowly and thoughtfully.

"There's Mickeyritter, he said that he'd make a lady out of me, some day, but he's a thief, he is; an' that's the way he wants to make a lady out of me. I know; I ain't a-goin' to steal for nobody an' he sent me up to the Island."

"That's right; you just stick to that," and the Doctor patted the girl's head. "By the way, what is your name?"

"Molly," was the prompt reply.

"Molly what?"

"Molly nothin', I guess," dubiously. "I never was called nothin' but Molly, 'cept Mickeyritter, an' he calls me Molly Bawn; that's Irish for fair Molly, so he says."

"Molly Bawn," the Doctor repeated. "Well, now, that is a very pretty name and very appropriate. But, Molly, I should think you could find something better to do than to sell papers. You look like a smart girl."

"I ain't a fool, you bet?" was the characteristic answer.

"Couldn't you get a place with some family?"

"I guess not," doubtfully. "I haven't got any one to speak for me, an' I don't look jest the cheese to go an' apply for a situation."

"How old are you, Molly?"

"Sixteen."

"As old as that?" the Doctor exclaimed, in astonishment.

"Yes; I know I don't look that old, but I am."

"Are your parents dead?"

"I guess so; I never heard any thing about them."

"Sixteen," the Doctor muttered, to himself; "that is the exact age of the child! Why not take this waif that heaven has thrown in my way and give up the search for the other? The mystic tie of blood half the time lies in imagination, not in reality."

The girl had watched the face of the Doctor attentively; her quick wit had divined that, in some way, she was connected with the meditation of her new-made friend.

"Molly, suppose I should find a place for you?" he questioned.

"That would be jolly!" she cried, emphatically.

"You would go with me?"

"Jest you try me!"

The impulsive answer fully satisfied the Doctor.

"One good turn deserves another, you know," he said, lightly; "you saved me from the fellows who were in wait for me, the other night, and now I can square the account."

And then, just as the words passed his lips, the Doctor felt a soft hand on his shoulder, and a woman's voice sounded in his ears.

(To be continued.)

NADIA,
THE RUSSIAN SPY;
OR,
The Brothers of the Starry Cross.
BY CAPT. FREDERICK WHITTAKER,
AUTHOR OF "THE RED RAJAH," "THE SEA CAT," "ROCK RIDER," "DOUBLE-DEATH," ETC., ETC.
CHAPTER XV.
IN THE MIST.

"CRACK! CRACK! CRACK!" went the muskets, and a shower of bullets whistled overhead and splashed into the water round them.

The four men continued to pull seaward through the mist as if nothing had happened. Only Paddy Carroll observed.

"And isn't it a pity to waste expensive powder like that, boys? Sure the omadham's couldn't hit a barn av they was to try."

The caiques were very swift boats, but the steamer was still swifter; and in another minute was up to them.

"Double an' twist," cried the piper, as the sharp bows of the propeller grazed the stern of his caïque, and he suited the action to the word.

Before the clumsy Turkish engineer could stop his engines, the two swifts were heading for Pera in the wake of the guard-boat, and the latter had glided into the mist out of sight.

They could distinctly hear the puff of her engines subsiding, a loud clatter of wheels through the night, then the renewed puff, puff, that told them their enemies had reversed the engine at last.

Still the two caiques were side by side, and completely buried in mist, when Sandy the piper spoke, in a low tone:

"Wahsh! wahsh! wahsh! pull sae loud and strong. As far as runnin' awa's concerned, the steamer has the heels of us, but they canno' feed us 't the mirk, gin we're only careful. Let the Turkymen gang speering about the lawbor 'a they like, an' if they can't too near us, jest let 'em be!"

The advice was so obviously sound that it was instantly taken. Instead of continuing their violent efforts, the oars thundering in the rowlocks as before, they took a slow and measured stroke, listening and waiting on the motions of the propeller.

The puffing of the latter's engine was heard sweeping in circles through the fog, sometimes nearer, sometimes further off. Every time it approached the fugitives lay on their oars, and allowed their pursuers to pass by: every time it grew distant, they increased the distance by pulling away.

And all these movements took place in a time of profound darkness, in the midst of a dense fog, so that when they were pulling hardest, they knew not which way they were going.

At last came the welcome intelligence that the search was given up: coming in the shape of a fast lessening puff of the Harem guard-boat; and then it was that Sandy McPherson looked around him, and said:

"I wonder whaur are we, laddies? Does anybody ken?"

"And how should we?" asked Paddy, innocently. "Barrin' we're in the Bosphorus, as they call it, divil a thing do I know. Sure and the tide 'll take us out to say, av we ain't careful!"

"Mon dieu, mes amis," said Pichot, suddenly, "we're all adrift as you call it, and dere is no tellin' were we stop. Dis broadboard, vat you call fog, is ver' thick, and dere is no lights. Vy not let us go de little bateaux, and vaitch for de light of de sheeps?"

"Deed then, and it's the maist sensible thing we can do," said the piper; "and at this time, lads, we have na' said lika word to the bonny leddy we hu' rescued, whilk is neither ceevil nor kind to the leddy, and whilk we beg her to pardon us, as bein' anely intent upon getting ye safe out of the enemy's clutches."

The girl Leila rose up from the stern of the piper's boat, where she had been crouched in perfect silence during the whole trip, and spoke in a low, clear voice.

"My preservers and friends, I thank you from the bottom of a grateful heart for your brave efforts in my behalf. We seem to be safe at last, at all events far away from the prison I fled. Tell me, what is yonder light, and you will be able to guide yourselves."

As she spoke, she pointed out into the mist ahead, and for the first time the other occupants of the boat perceived a dim green light shining through the fog.

"Eh, God guide us!" cried the piper; "the bonny leddy has the shairpest e'en of the pairty. Yon's a steamer light, my leddy, and we canna do better than to steer toward it."

"Do so, my brave friends," said the lady, "and only do this favor: when you have ascertained in what direction the city lies, take me there, and conduct me to the American consulate. I have friends there that will take care of me. For yourselves, I request you, ere we go further, to accept of these rings as a testimony of my thankfulness to you. Do not hesitate to dispose of the jewels they contain, if you are in need, but I beg you to keep the rings themselves as a remembrance of me, and, if ever you want to be taken prisoners by the Russians during the terrible war now about to open, you will find in them a passport to kind treatment, where you would least expect it."

As she spoke, she handed the piper four rings of various sizes, with the remark:

"Let the brave Scot keep the largest for himself, and distribute the rest as he judges best. Now forward."

The piper kissed the soft hand extended to him with deep respect, and placed the rings in his sporran.

"I'll do yer will blithely, my leddy," he said.

"Away went the two caiques through the mist, and rapidly neared the green light. They could see that it was hung over the side of a great, black mass, that resolved itself into a steamer lying at anchor. Close under the corner of the marine monster, a hoarse voice hailed them:

"Boat ahoy! where are you bound to at this time of night?"

"Deed and I'd be blithe gin I kened that same," responded Sandy, dryly. "We're jest soldiers that's lost their way, ye ken, and we want you to tell us whaur the deil's Constantine is."

"Off the larboard bow, ye landlubbers," said the voice, in a gruff tone. "Them soldiers ain't got no more gumption than a flock of sheep, I'll swear."

"Thank ye kindly, mon," said Sandy, politely. "Ye're a braw laddie, and ye ha'e the manners o' a sailor, whilk is to say, no see muckle o' those o' a gentleman. Gude-night."

They heard a grumbling volley of oaths as they pulled away from the ship; and, in about five minutes afterward, the lights of Stamboul gleamed through the fog ahead.

In a little while they had pulled in and landed, when the four comrades escorted their beautiful charge to the doors of the American consulate, and knocked loudly for admission.

CHAPTER XVI.
THE LETTER.

COUNT IVAN CYPRIANOFF, brigade-general of

Russian artillery, was riding slowly home toward Sebastopol from a tour of inspection of the neighboring redoubts, according to orders from the palace. He was accompanied by only a single orderly, a Don Cossack, none other than our old friend Potapoff.

The count was a young and handsome man, with aristocratic features and peculiarly soft manners. The expression of his clear-cut face was marked with general depression and sadness, an expression which never varied, save addressing an inferior, when it was replaced by a smile of singular sweetness.

Count Ivan checked his horse on the summit of Balaklava height, and looked down at the distant city of Sebastopol.

"Not for long, not for long," he murmured, "will the bells ring out peace and joy to thee, oh, thou city of the Tartar. Already I can hear the distant mutterings of the storm soon to break over thy head; and well may I tremble when I think of Russia and her danger, before the hordes of foes to attack her. Alas! know what is coming better than those around—ah! what is it, Potapoff?" He interrupted addressing as Potapoff coughed.

The sergeant saluted stiffly, and pointed seaward.

"A steamer, General, coming in."

The count gazed long and earnestly seaward, and beheld the long, black column of smoke on the horizon.

"It must be the Vladimir," he said, to himself. "She is the only cruiser out. Come, Potapoff, we must gallop off we expect to get the news in time."

He turned his horse and galloped at break-neck speed down the hill and across the deep ravine that separates Sebastopol from the mainland, followed by the Cossack.

It was a long ride, and not till the evening sun was sloping to the fortifications did the two horsemen enter the streets of Sebastopol.

The young General of artillery was in command of the whole garrison at the time, awaiting the arrival of Prince Menshikoff and his army. As he rode through the gate, guards turned out, sentries saluted, and drums beat; but he only answered by raising his hat, and galloped on, pulling up at last at the Quay of St. Nicholas, just as the funnel of the Vladimir came into full view among the masts of the shipping, and the swift war-steamer herself moved up to the quay with beating screw-blades.

On the quarter-deck stood a tall, dashing-looking officer, whose face and figure were unmistakably foreign. Not a feature of his countenance was eastern, but, on the contrary, western. The very manner of growth of his beard, thickest in front and thin at the cheeks, his hawk-like profile and piercing eyes, marked him, even in Russian naval uniform, for an American.

As the steamer stopped by the quay and threw out bow and stern lights, with a rapidity such as the slow Russians never could have accomplished unassisted, Count Cyprianoff raised his hat and called out, in English:

"All welcome, Captain Livingstone. Are there any news as yet?"

"Bushels of 'em, count. Got a letter for you. What d'ye think of that?" cried the dashing officer, in answer. "Will you wait till I come ashore, or are you good on the fly?"

As he spoke he held up a large, square letter with a seal.

Count Cyprianoff held out both his hands, and the captain sent the white note flying to its destination. The young General caught it, and looked at the superscription, only to turn pale as death.

"Where got you this, Malcolm?" he asked, hoarsely.

The Russo-Yankee captain was so much absorbed in orders about his horses that he neglected to reply; and the young General did not press the question. Instead, he thrust the letter into his bosom, and galloped away to his own quarters to read it in quiet, while Captain Malcolm Livingstone continued his task of securing the Vladimir to the quay.

When the vessel was fast, the captain beckoned to his second in command, and said to him:

"I shall go on shore and report, now, Baron. Keep the fires going and steam up, for we shall put to sea again in half an hour. Don't allow a man to leave, on any pretense."

Lieutenant Baron Pulsky saluted silently; and his captain left the boat and crossed the gang-plank to the shore; when he ordered it withdrawn, and once more reiterated his orders about non-communication with the shore.

Then he started up the broad street toward the Governor's palace, putting by all the numerous inquiries addressed to him by the lounging officers with the words:

"Secret orders, gentlemen. Not a word, till I have reported to the prince."

In a short time he stood before the palace of the Governor, the rich and influential Prince Platoff, and, sending in his name, was admitted with alacrity.

He found the prince in his cabinet, in consultation with the young General of artillery, and a quiet, German-looking officer, who was introduced as Colonel Tollenbe, of the engineers.

The conversation was carried on in English, which all Russians of high rank speak with facility, they being, indeed, very remarkable linguists.

"Well, captain," said the prince, "and what news do you bring us? Have the enemy organized as yet?"

"The combined French and English fleets have sailed from Varna and Gallipoli, your highness," said Livingstone; "and in twenty-four hours more will be off our coasts. I went close in to the only last night, and counted fifty-seven sail of the line, besides a multitude of transports and frigates."

"What is their destination? can you tell us that?" said the prince.

"I can only conjecture it, your highness," said the captain. "They must be coming here."

"I can answer your highness the question," said the clear, soft voice of Cyprianoff. "If your highness will permit."

Prince and colonel both started, and fixed their eyes on the young General in surprise.

"You, count! why, how can you know?" asked Platoff.

"I am not at liberty to tell," said the young General, with visible embarrassment; "but I have received my intelligence from authentic sources. The enemy will land at or near Eupatoria."

"Impossible," said the colonel of engineers, with a smile. "I think your informant must be in error, General. Why, to land there would be to expose their rear to constant attacks, while we hold the Isthmus of Perekop. It would be good news, no doubt, to us, if they would be so kind as you say they are, but I can not believe our enemies to be any greater fools than myself. I should certainly attack Perekop, and so cut off Sebastopol from succor, were I the allies."

The count looked earnestly at Prince Platoff.

"Your highness," he said, "I assure you solemnly that my informant heard the matter discussed at a council of war between Lord Raglan and Marshal St. Arnaud. Eupatoria was settled on, as the landing point."

There was a deep silence. Even Malcolm Livingston looked at his friend in doubt. At last Platoff said:

"Can you substantiate your statements, count? Where is your informant?"

"At the headquarters of the allies," said the count, quietly. "I can not say more at present, except this: if you find the information correct in thirty-six hours, I trust you will give me credit for truth when I bring you further news."

The prince rubbed his forehead thoughtfully.

"It is almost too good news to be true, count. They must be fools. Why, at this rate, their whole war will amount to no more than a mere siege of Sebastopol."

"That is the whole intention," said Cyprianoff, calmly.

"Is your informant one of the secret service?" asked the prince, keenly. "Does Gorloff know him?"

"No, your highness," said the count, drawing himself up with sudden haughtiness. "None of Gorloff's minions is capable of doing one tithe of what my informant does every day, at the imminent risk of death. It is a friend of my own, for whose honor I would vouch, as for that of my father, mother, sister, or brother."

"You're lucky there, count," said Livingston, with a drool look. "There are members of my family I wouldn't go bail for, to any extraordinary amount."

The prince shrugged his shoulders with a grimace. He too was troubled with black sheep in his family. But he only said:

"Are you sure that your friend has full means of knowing? Is he a Russian?"

"I am not at liberty to answer," said the count, in a low tone. "My friend is true to Russia, and you will find the intelligence true. That your highness may be able to judge for yourself in the future, here is my friend's letter."

And he drew from his breast a small folded sheet of note-paper, and handed it to Platoff.

The prince read it slowly, aloud:

"In council of war, last night, I heard the full plan of campaign, which I send you. The enemy will land at Eupatoria, march overland to Sebastopol, and lay siege to it on the south side. They are about eight thousand strong, but have very few horses, and are deficient in transportation. You should attack them on the march, and harass them on all occasions. They have no head, and the two leaders are at constant variance. When I hear more, and can send it, I will let you know. At present, believe no one truer to Russia and you than

STARKEY CROSS."

The party remained looking at each other for some minutes in silence, and then the prince observed, in a grave tone:

"Your friend belongs, I see, to a certain order, denominated by the emperor as traitors. I am not sure, Count Cyprianoff, but it is my duty to send this letter to the emperor, and place you under arrest for correspondence with the foreigner."

"Perhaps, indeed, you'd better do so," said Cyprianoff, with a significant glance.

Cyprianoff stood up, and a significant glance passed between him, Livingston, and Todleben; accompanied by a scarcely perceptible sign from one to the other. Then the count said:

"Prince Platoff, you know as well as I, who I am, and how many officers of your garrison are in the order. As an officer of the Czar, you and I have certain duties. As *brothers of the Starry Cross*, we have another, to stand by each other and save our country from all foes. Sir, I vouch for my friend as a *Grand Companion*. Is that enough?"

"The prince said no more. He screwed up his wrinkled old face into a queer expression, and deliberately tore up the letter he held in small fragments, which he threw into the stove."

"As a *Worthy Knight*, do you venture to recommend my action on that letter?" he asked, at last, in a peculiarly earnest tone.

"No," said Cyprianoff, with deep gravity. "That it shall be done, sir. Captain Livingston, put to sea at once."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE CAPTAIN OF THE VLADIMIR.

THE swift steamer Vladimir, of six guns, the crack vessel of the whole Russian navy in the Black Sea, was out once more in the midnight: with deep clouds overhead, through which the moonlight shone in occasional glimpses, and with a tossing sea beneath. The steamer was going at a low rate of speed, no lights exhibited from any part of her black hull, her naked spars entirely invisible in the thick darkness, whenever the moon went behind a cloud.

The Vladimir was one of those vessels, of a construction, since so common, twenty years ago almost unknown, which concentrated her offensive means in a few guns of great power. Many a time afterward she proved her ability to run away from the best vessels of England or France, and played a role of ubiquity and destruction only equaled since by the renowned Alabama.

Some three miles off, on the starboard bow, could be seen a long line of lights, dotting the sea for an immense extent, marking the line of the allied fleets, stretching toward Sebastopol, and the Vladimir was hovering round them in the darkness, watching their movements.

Malcolm Livingston, once of the U. S. service, now post-captain in the Russian navy, was seated in the mizzen-top, with a glass in his hand, scanning the hostile fleet intently. Beside him, in the top, was another officer, wrapped in a sea-cloak, who was none other than General Count Cyprianoff, who had volunteered on this risky reconnaissance for reasons best known to himself.

"What will the signal be, Ivan?" asked Livingston, after they had sat thus in silence for some time.

"A green rocket and three lights from the English admiral's vessel," said the count, in a low tone. "That will tell us whether to hover around any longer or return to Sebastopol."

"How so?"

"If one of the lights is red, we are to meet a boat with dispatches from my— Well, you know."

"Ay, ay, I know. But how are we to find the boat?"

"She will be a Stamboul felucca, carrying the Turkish flag, with a cross of stars on a little flag at the mast-head."

"By thunder! Why, that's the same craft that boarded me off Sinope, and gave me that letter, Ivan?"

"I know it," said the count, calmly. "Did you notice the crew and captain, Malcolm?"

"Oh, common Turks—lazy and stupid. How the letter came to be trusted to them is more than I can imagine."

The count smiled.

"You're a good sailor, but a poor detective, Malcolm. Just such a messenger runs the least risk of detection."

"Ha! what's that?" said the captain, suddenly. The deep boom of a cannon echoed over the sea as he spoke, and the flash of the gun came from the center of the enemy's line.

A moment after up went three rockets together, of three different colors, from the supposed flagship; and five lights in a row were simultaneously displayed along her foreyard.

"What's that for?" muttered Livingston.

"I wish we had a copy of their signal code, Ivan. It's all Greek to us so far."

"That means 'head to the northward,'" said Ivan, quietly. "I received a copy of most of their signals in the letter you brought me. You little thought the value of the package you took when that Turk hailed you, Malcolm. Our own signal means 'follow the admiral's flag-ship.' They little think what it means to us though. See, yonder it goes."

As he spoke, down came the five lights on the distant ship, and they heard her blow her steam-whistle loudly, while the treble line of lights that suddenly swept into view announced her a three-decker with open ports, which had hauled her wind or put her helm to starboard; for they could distinctly see her moving in front of the rest of the fleet.

Then up went a green rocket, just as they expected, and the three lights followed it, the center one red.

Ivan uttered a low exclamation of joy.

"The boat is coming; perhaps I shall see her, Malcolm."

"Now, don't you go exciting yourself," said Malcolm, dryly. "We're a long way off from that boat yet. How are we going to find her, in the first place? We can't fly by till morning, or they'll chase us away."

"She must be somewhere astern of the transports, perhaps in their midst," said Cyprianoff, doubtfully; "but what to do I can not say. Remember, I am no sailor."

The captain laughed.

"That's plain enough. Well, then, if she's among those transports, I'm going for her."

"Going for whom?" asked Cyprianoff, surprised.

"Going for our friend in the felucca through those gentlemen yonder," said Livingston, coolly. "It's no use beating round the bush any longer. It's a dark night, and the shortest way to find the transports astern, is to run down to the men-of-war ahead. I'm going to try it, by thunder, sink or swim."

As he spoke he shut up the glass with an emphatic bang, and began to descend the rigging to the quarter-deck, followed by his friend, the General of artillery.

Arrived on deck, he called to his second in command, Baron Pulsky, saying:

"Call all hands to quarters without noise, baron. We are going to run the gantlet of the enemy's fleet."

The baron saluted, silently, and turned away to execute the order, while Livingston addressed a midshipman.

"Tell the engineer officer to put on all steam, sir. We need a clean pair of heels to-night."

Then to the helmsman: "Hard a-port. Run the ship down to the enemy's line at once."

In less than five minutes the guns were manned, the magazine open, and the Vladimir, with all hands at quarters, was running down on the allied fleet at sixteen knots an hour. Ten minutes more brought them under the guns of the whole fleet, and yet, so dark was the night, they were still unnoticed. Another minute would decide the question, and Livingston called out:

"Silence fore and aft. I answer all hails. Wait for orders, and lie down at your guns."

Away went the swift steamer through the darkness, and in another moment was under the quarter of the gigantic three-decker, the Britannia, the flag-ship of the British admiral.

As they came nearer, there was a sudden bustle and noise on the flag-ship, and an officer sprang into the mizzen chains shouting:

"Ship ahoy! What ship's that? Avast there, or we'll fire into you! What ship's that, I say?"

"American sloop-of-war, Powhatan, bound for the Mediterranean," cried the clear tones of Livingston. "My compliments to the admiral, and we're in a thundering hurry. Good-night!"

As he spoke the steamer rushed through the space in the line between flag-ship and follower at such a speed, and with such a close shave, that she carried away the bow-sprit of the next ship. Then she steamed into the disorderly crowd of transports astern, followed by a rattling volley of curses from the British officers, among which the epithets, "Yankee black-guard," "scoundrel," etc., etc., were the very mildest.

Livingstone shouted back through his trumpet:

"Good-by, gentlemen! Remember the Vladimir," and the next moment was hailed from close alongside.

"Vladimir ahoy! Take this from Starry Cross."

The captain looked over the side as the ship flew past a small felucca. On the deck stood a female figure wrapped in a cloak. The next minute a white package was thrown from the felucca, and fell on the steamer's deck.

And then came the thunder of cannon, as several ships opened fire on the reckless cruiser, flying away from them at sixteen knots an hour through the black night.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 102.)

Ytol:

Lost, Wedded, Widowed and Rewon.

A STORY OF TRIALS AND BALMS.

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR.,

AUTHOR OF "ATRAILING A HEART," "BLACK HAND," "IRON AND GOLD," "RED SCORFON," "PEARL OF TEARS," "HUNCHBACK OF NUREMBERG," "CAT AND TIGER," "FLAMING TAILSMAN," ETC.

CHAPTER XXVI.

SOME ONE CRIES HELP.

"Shrill as the night-owl, pierced upon the air, a wailing cry—twice wailing in the dark—Where, where, where, would scarce be brave to dare The stalking shadows 'mid the gloomy park."

—ARON.

THE blow that felled Lord Somers was inflicted with a club, and the hand that dealt it was no sparing one.

When he recovered consciousness, he was lying across the protruding gnarl of a tree-base, on the cold, damp earth, and all around was ominously still.

Objects were indistinguishable at the distance of a few feet; and, as he lay there, for some moments bewildered, and collecting his scattered senses, he could hear the drip! drip! drip! of wet, and the peculiar whisper that dwells among trees on a misty, drizzly night.

Slowly gaining his feet, he glanced about, trying to penetrate the gloom; then he half-groined his way in the direction of the house.

"It was strange—who could have struck me?" he muttered, feeling the sore wound on his head. "Curses! They may have escaped after all. Perfidious woman! she had it well planned. Some accomplice of his, I suppose."

As he drew near, the side door was thrown open, and a smothered flow of light slanted over the grass, guiding him forward.

At the foot of the staircase stood the valet. "Well, my lord, have you seen?"

"Enough, and twice enough!" hissed the Englishman, passing in.

The valet suddenly uttered an exclamation. "You are bloody! You are covered with mud! What has happened, my lord?"

"Don't question me"—snappishly. "Has Lady Somers returned?"

"She did not come this way—"

"And you have watched?"

"Faithfully, since you went out."

Somers continued up the stairs. He went straight to Ytol's apartment and wrenched the door open with a fierce jerk. Then he paused. Finette was seated in the center of the room on a small traveling sack.

His abrupt entrance, the blood upon his face, the frown that knit his brow, the mud upon his garments, and the haggard, angry look he fixed upon her—these startled her, and she sprang up, shrinking before him.

"What does this mean?" he demanded. "Where are you going at this time of night, and with a satchel. Speak."

For a second she stared at him guiltily. "Oh, my lord, you will forgive. I was running away. I do not like it here. I would fly from—"

"Run away?—yes, with your mistress! I see it all. Where is Lady Somers?"

"I can not say—"

"You can not say? But, do you know?"

"No, no, no; I do not. I swear to it. Have you seen her?"

"I have—"

"Oh! then where is she?" cried Finette, simulating great anxiety. "To-night she lies down early, and when I come to her bedside, she is gone. I fear Madame walks in her sleep. It is terrible. Some hurt will befall her. Oh! where is she?—where is Madame?"

She wrung her hands in affected grief, then hid her face and sobbed most naturally.

But he was not to be deceived.

"You are a vile schemer!" he exclaimed, striding forward and grasping her by the arm. "Tell me where your mistress is?"

"Indeed I do not know. I can not say. I fear—"

"By Heaven! I'll help you to tell the truth," he snarled, in a rage, and quickly transferring his hold to her throat. "Tell me now—speak, or I'll choke you!"

"Mercy! Mercy, my lord!" she gasped, sinking down.

His savage grip was strangling her.

"Will you tell me?"

"I know not! I know not!" gurgled from the choking throat.

His face was contorted fearfully as he held her quivering there, his bloody matted hair and stained features giving him a ferocious mien. He suspected that Finette knew well of her mistress's perfidy. She was lying to him. He would compel her to speak the truth.

Tighter closed the deadly grip. Her face was purpling—then he slightly loosed the coiling fingers that she might articulate.

"Mercy!" she begged, with a struggling accent.

He suddenly let her go and started back. A faint scream reached his ears, coming—from where he could not decide.

Finette also heard it.

"It is she! It is Madame! I know her voice. Oh, my poor Madame! She is killed, perhaps. Oh! oh! oh!"

And while they listened for a repetition of the outcry there was another sound.

Click! tink! tink-a-tink! Click! tink! tink! as if from the surrounding walls.

"What does that mean, Finette?"

"It is in the next house. So strange. This tink! tink! I have heard it every night for a long time before my lord returns from the tour with Madame. It has been so all the time since, this hammer, hammer, hammer."

And again from the wall.

Click! tink! tink-a-tink! tink! tink!

"What can they be doing in there?"

"So strange."

"It sounds like some one shaping iron upon an anvil."

"It must be. But what can they have for an anvil in there?" wondered Finette.

At that juncture, and mingling with the mysterious rapping which seemed to issue from the adjoining house, there was a patter of horse-hoofs outside, as of some one hurrying up, springing swiftly, despite the fact of the night being so dark that it was difficult to keep the path.

To this Somers and the maid also listened; and the continual hammering beyond the wall, which excited their curiosity, and the coming horseman, whose arrival surprised him because he did not expect visitors, and his own undecided condition of mind relative to suspicions which he allowed himself to fasten on Finette, all these combined, as it were, held him in a state of hesitation, as to whether he should again descend and see who had ridden out there on such a night, or whether he should inquire into the cause of that woman's scream and the singular click! tink! tink! tink! which followed it, and was now sounding in his ears.

While in this mood of indecision, a servant appeared in the doorway.

"Visitors in the parlor, my lord," he announced.

"What names?"

"One said 'Faerot,' and one said 'Yarik,' and both said 'it's urgent.'"

"I will come at once. Stay—Have you seen Lady Somers to-night?"

"No, my lord."

Somers bestowed a scowl upon the maid, and followed the servant from the room. When he had bathed his wounded head—putting on a smoking-cap to hide its disfigurement—and arranged his disordered attire, he descended and was ushered and bowed in to his visitors.

"Excuse the lateness of the hour," said Faerot, arising and saluting politely, "but our business, sir, is of great importance."

Yarik was seated to one side, his slouch hat hung on his knee, and stroking his grizzled beard as he surveyed them.

"Waive an apology; it is unnecessary. Please state your object."

"You recently wedded with a young girl named Ytol Lyn, did you not?"

"Yes."

"I am invested with the power of executor by the will of her grandfather, David Dane. She derives large benefit from this will. We have had quite a search after her, to apprise her of her good fortune. I suppose she has told you that her true name is not Lyn?"

"No, she has not. I ascertained it, however," replied Somers, who was interested.

"Her early life, I believe, has been involved in some obscurity."

"One moment: was this David Dane—who you say was her grandfather—once a diamond merchant in London?"

"Yes; and an American."

"My father knew him well. You say he died and left his grandchild, Ytol, a fortune?"

"A move that fortune. We almost caught up with this heir, at Wilde Manor, near Liverpool, where we saw her aunt, Mrs. Layworth—"

"Her aunt?"

"Yes."

"Is Mrs. Layworth her aunt?" exclaimed the astonished Englishman.

Faerot proceeded to give him a few items proving Ytol's identity. Somers' surprise increased as he listened.

"But, will you be kind enough to summon your wife? We had best talk it over with her present. I would like to see her."

Somers grew uneasy. He shifted his position restlessly, half-rose, and sat down again, saying:

"My dear sir, I can not conceal a disagreeable fact from you, considering the mission that brings you here. I might as well be plain. My house is disgraced. Lady Somers has—"

The sentence was unfinished. Ere he could speak further, they were startled by a shriek on the night without—a shriek so loud, long and piercing that their blood fairly curdled.

"Blast my teeth!" snorted Yarik. "Did you ever hear that, Cap?"

In the same breath, Somers' valet rushed in, wildly excited.

"My lord! My lord!" he panted.

"What was that?"

"There's being murder done in the next house. Hear!—there it is again. Don't you know the voice, my lord?"

"Whose is it?"

"Lady Somers'!"

"Hark!—yes, it's her voice."

"Help! Help! Help!" echoed dully through the still air outside.

Then all was hushed.

Somers bounded away, followed by Faerot. But Hoyle Yarik was ahead of them. The latter leaped the stone wall separating the two lots—ascended the steps—kicked open the door, and darted up the staircase.

The cries had ceased. But he felt that some fearful deed was in progress, and, drawing a revolver from his bosom, he dashed on.

When Lord Somers withdrew, and left Finette alone, she ran to the window and threw open the blinds, with the ostensible view of escaping by the high vine-trellis against the wall. But she staggered back, frightenedly.

There was a small rail balcony to the window, and on this balcony, pale, bareheaded and staring at her, was Wharrie Dufour.

"It is Madame's lover!" she cried.

He strode in and up to her.

"Where is your mistress, girl?"

"Alas, I can not tell! Have you not seen her? Oh! I fear for her—poor Madame; something has harmed her!"

"I met her in the garden half an hour ago," Wharrie said, speaking in a rapid, husky tone. "We were about to escape, when we were discovered and I was struck insensible. When I recovered, she was gone. Did she not come back here?"

"No—no—no!" Finette moaned, clasping her hands in genuine anxiety.

"Hark!—what is that cry?"

The scream that started those below rung in his ears at this moment.

"Oh, it is Madame! They are killing her—"

"They! Who?"

"She must be in next door—the other fine house. And they—"

Wharrie sprang back toward the window. But Finette caught him by the arm.

"Not that way. Come with me—I show you. Come. Oh! poor Madame—poor Madame!" She ran from the room and along the hall, till they reached the narrow, ladder-like stairs that led to the roof.

"Up! up!" she urged. "Poor Madame! They are killing her!"

They ascended to the roof, and she pulled him across to a skylight, which was shining with the rays of lamps beneath.

In a second they were by this and looking down; in another second they recoiled with a shudder of horror.

The sight they saw was enough to stay the pulsing of their hearts.

"Oh, God!" groaned Wharrie Dufour, clapping his hands to his eyes to shut out the horrible vision.

CHAPTER XXVII.

AT BAY.

"Now, mercy to the winds I cast thee off!" —MILMAN.

"Oh, agony of fear!" —SHELLEY.

"How awful is that hour!" —PERCIVAL.

As Ytol sunk, unconscious and limp, in the arms of the figure that threw the sheet over her head, the first figure—the one that had struck down Lord Somers—bounded toward her and lifted her from the earth as though she were but a child.

The two then glided swiftly away until they reached the wall separating the two gardens. Here they passed through a sort of embrasure, into the next property; the one carrying Ytol—and who was a man—running ahead, and the other—who was a female—following closely.

Into the house, by a narrow entrance; then up several flights of stairs, through a long, dimly lighted hallway, finally pausing at the door of a room in the third story—and this room the one next to that in which Finette was seated at the moment, and from beyond whose wall had come the enigmatic sounds arousing the curiosity of those who heard.

The apartment was large, square, high-ceilinged, carpetless, bare of furniture—with slight exception—and with windows tightly closed.

At one side was a plain couch, and on this couch Ytol was laid by her captors, Dwila St. Jean and the Dwarf.

But we look further.

Near the center of the rear wall there was once a fire-place. This had been torn out and rebuilt, so as to arrange a blacksmith's furnace, with bellows and all complete in miniature. Before the furnace several sheets of iron to protect the inflammable flooring from sparks; and on the improvised covering a polished anvil, with hammers, pincers and punches leaning against it.

Directly in front of the whole was a rude, stout chair, with a high, straight back, curving abruptly at the top, with a groove for the neck, and which, by close scrutiny, we discover to be riveted to the boards. About it dangled buckling straps, and behind it was a screw to adjust the top piece for the head of whoever should sit in it.

After depositing his burden on the bed, Catdjo stepped to

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We have in hand, for early use, a new Romance of the Woods, by the favorite story-teller,

OLL COOMES.

It is a tale of the Michigan Forest and Lake in the first year of the war of 1812, when the Indians banded with the British to regain control of the North-west territory. The story is

Alive with Startling Incident and Interest, with much strange adventure on lake and land, and a mystery of personal history that is very attractive and exciting.

Our Arm-Chair.

A Letter from "The Sergeant."—We are in receipt of the following, which speaks for itself:

"SAYBROOK, MOLEMAN CO., ILLINOIS,
 Nov. 10, 1873.

"EDITOR THE SATURDAY STAR JOURNAL:
 "I have just read a short story in the 'JOURNAL,' Golden Wealth, by Caroline Ollivant, which is so pleasing—the moral to which it points so good, that I can not resist the desire to address you, expressing the hope that the 'JOURNAL' will present its readers with many more such stories. It is claimed by many that Henry Ward Beecher is the most brightly-burning beacon-light, at present guiding the stoniness of our immoral and corrupt stevedores toward repentance and salvation, but I doubt if Mr. Beecher ever uttered a sermon that has done as much good as Miss Ollivant's beautiful and pleasing little story. How many, after perusing the same, have wished 'from the heart' that they were better—purer in morals, and less selfish! How many have resolved even to be better—to live and not more becoming the character of a man or woman—to become, in fact, more worthy of man's esteem and God's love! Hundreds, doubtless. And may the hundreds increase to many thousands. Let each issue of the 'JOURNAL' contain its 'Golden Wealth,' and thus increase the debt which humanity already owes you.

"Very respectfully,
 G. H. BATES.
 ("Sergeant Bates, Bearer of the Flag.")

The sergeant evidently is a careful reader. We remember the little story referred to; it conveyed a very good moral, that is true; and so do many of our stories and sketches. We have, probably, published more stories whose moral and indirect influence is good than any other popular paper; and while the office of the SATURDAY JOURNAL is not that of teacher or preacher, its editors always bear in mind the great responsibility of the journalist—to publish nothing, in word or act, which can do harm. The SATURDAY JOURNAL is a repository of pure, wholesome and interesting reading, adapted to our homes and firesides, and the most earnest desire of its publishers is to make it first among all papers devoted to the entertainment and enlightenment of the people.

Chat.—In answer to a letter from a "Mother," who writes to protest against the expensive attire which school-girls adopt, we may assume that nothing which we can say will affect any change. The spirit of purse-proud of fathers and mothers has reached their children, as a matter of course, and when shoddy and oddish go to school dressed in silk and loaded with rings and bracelets, the spirit of envy and desire to be "just as good as anybody," impels the children of poorer parents to grow unhappy over their own plainer costumes. The true reform lies at home—to make children think less of clothes and more of mind and manners. Teachers are not, in any way, responsible for the dress of their pupils. If a girl comes to school with diamonds on her fingers and Lyons silk on her back, may tell us how the teacher can prevent it. No; the sin lies in the subservience of woman to "appearances." So long as you say, "I must dress to keep up appearances," your children will say the same; and the remedy lies in your example—to dress within your means and be governed wholly by your own sense of what is fit and proper.

—What is called "window gardening" is very pretty both as a study and pastime. To keep in the house, during the winter, a few pots of flowers, a hanging-basket and a moss crib is not a hard thing to do, and affords a deal of pleasure. The taste for flowers is one that should be encouraged. The home destitute of their sweet influence is, you may rest assured, a hard home, unsympathetic, indifferent and practical to a painful degree. Where flowers are you will find one sweet nature at least. There are women who will whine and snuffle over a lap-dog's ailments, and nurse it by the hour, to whom a flower-pot is a bore. Such poor souls deserve pity—they are so insignificant. There is more to excite affection, to develop the love of the beautiful, to promote cheerfulness of mind and sometimes of temper in a bed of pink or verbenas than in all the puppies that "King Charles" has had to acknowledge. A love of puppies, in fact, is disgusting when it comes to eating and sleeping with, and kissing and fondling the brutes, as it is "fashionable" now to do. Out with the poodles and in with the flowers! say we.

—The mistakes and improprieties of speech in our common conversation are very numerous. We do not refer to bad grammar—which of course is pardonable in those denied a knowledge of grammar—but to errors of signification and false powers to words. As for instance, we hear of a great quantity of people, when the correct word is number of people; we have of frequent occurrence such phrases as:

No one ever had less friends—meaning fewer.
 I propose to see him—meaning I purpose.
 He plunged downward—omit downward.
 He woke up at once—omit up.

I arose up—omit up.
 And a thousand other forms equally incorrect. It is a very bad habit to drop into this indifference to the proprieties of speech. Precision should always be the study. Logic is a fine study to give precision in statement and presentation of ideas; but no one has to study logic to avoid verbal inaccuracies. Some people laugh when told that the dictionary is a pleasant study, but it shows their own ignorance of the true value of a lexicon. Every person should have an unabridged vocabulary, and should make special studies of words. That alone will give precision in speech. As for instance, ascertain the difference between revive,

refresh, renovate, etc., etc.; between rest, repose, ease, quiet, etc., etc.; between restraint, constraint, coercion, etc., etc.; between intercede, interpose, interfere, intermeddle, etc., etc. Not one person in one hundred uses the "right word in the right place," and chiefly because not one person in a hundred is aware of the true power and signification of words usually denominated synonyms. There are very few actual synonyms in the English language, as any one will discover who studies the Unabridged.

SERMONETTE.

VI.
 "If you've any debt to pay,
 Rest you neither night nor day,
 Pay it."

THAT'S good advice and ought to be heeded, because any thing borrowed should be returned, and as soon as possible.

I have heard it said that persons always pay their gambling debts, and we mustn't be reckoned worse than gamblers, must we? It is better to keep out of debt if you can, but sometimes that is impossible, and I don't consider it such a very great crime either. One of our philosophers once remarked that, if a young man had but fifty cents, he had better spend that amount in corn and parch it rather than go in debt, and it was copied and eulogized by almost the entire press.

Now, Eve and I had a wondering fit come upon us in regard to that advice. We fancied that the author of those lines had plenty of money of his own at command and did not lack for any of the necessities of this world; not even the luxuries were denied him. I don't blame him for having them, but we could not feel that he would be willing to follow his own advice.

Pop-corn is very nice and I am fond of it, but it is not very substantial sort of food, and gives one neither brain nor muscle; living on such dry fare would not be likely to give the young man a robust constitution or impenetrable him with sufficient stamina to do hard work.

What was the young man to do when his pop-corn was all devoured?

Borrowing money will sometimes set up a person in a lucrative business and may aid him more than you are aware of. The man or woman who borrows money, never thinking to return the same, must be beneath one's notice, but he who is willing to pay, battling against misfortune, struggling with trouble, and is ambitious to succeed, ought to be helped—and I say God bless the noble, willing, manly hearts that do help him; they won't repent loaning him a few dollars. One who has a tussle with poverty, and fights bravely on to conquer it, will battle fiercer still to show his gratitude; he will not forget to return his gratitude to those who aided him when he needed aid.

Few beings, in business or out of it, but have to borrow; trade would stagnate were it otherwise; but, if it would, soon come to an end and were not these debts liquidated. When you promise to return the loaned sum at a certain time, be sure that you do so, or you may seriously interfere with the plans of him who was so good as to help you.

Those who are now in flourishing circumstances, and who rank high and honorably in the estimation of good people, did not think it such a disgrace to borrow a trifle in getting along; but, be assured, they paid back every cent of their indebtedness, and now they are—or they ought to be—as willing to accommodate others as they were willing once to be accommodated themselves.

Grandma Lawless wants to know if I can't say something about returning household utensils that are borrowed? Yes, I can, for I know, to my sorrow, that I couldn't have griddle-cakes for supper the other night—and Charlie is so fond of them—because some one had forgotten to return the griddle. You perceive I'm not above doing housework, especially when I am expecting somebody to supper. I just put that borrowed one of my griddle-cakes, and I hope she was benefited by my thoughts and good wishes.

And—can you believe it?—she was actually "put out" when I sent for it, the next day, and remarked something about "people being in an awful hurry for an old griddle." Do you believe that "old griddle" ever visited her domicile again? On the faith of the Lawless blood I can say, never!

Then they borrow my papers and magazines, and forget—what memories some people are afflicted with—to return them until I feel vexed enough to bite my finger nails and quote all the strong expressions in Shakespeare; but I don't, because I promised grandma and Charlie I wouldn't, yet all the while I keep wishing that they would bring back my dear friends, the periodicals, sooner than they do, or, better still, subscribe for the said periodicals. If I remonstrate, they "think I am mean and stingy and haven't any soul." Well, perhaps I am afflicted that way, but when I borrow, I return, and do you think I am too exacting if I expect it of others?

BLESSED BE WORK.

BLESSED work! Half of us do not appreciate the boon of having plenty to do in this busy world. We grumble over the divinest compensation meted out to man, the friction which brings out the human diamond's greatest luster, which wears off the rust of sloth and inertia and all manner of dull shells which would otherwise close us in.

Satan finds mischief for idle hands and idle minds. A man needs work to live and better inheritance to his children than habits of idleness thoroughly inculcated. Better things than hoarded wealth, than stocks and real estate and the expensive, aristocratic and indolent customs of our growing age.

Alas, that it is no longer fashionable to work! That the mean, bowing spirit of servility leads so many to conceal the necessity where it exists, and where does it not exist in some one form or other! Alas, for the underhand shifts, the unequal struggle carried on between false pride and respectable poverty!

What happier man than he whose hand-labor keeps his heart always fresh, who is independent through the strength given for use, who is lovingly faithful in supporting the charge of a little home where a helpful wife presides, where bright eyes and curly heads and scampering feet are tripping over the life-path to relieve him when time begins to weigh heavily, and willing young shoulders ease him of his burden! Whose fault is it that such homes are so few, that they grow scarcer with every year and day? This outgrowth of false pretensions, this assumption of appearances we can not well support, are dearly paid for in the loss of comfort they entail.

Who are they whose children rise up and call them blessed? Not the man who buries himself in a musty counting-room, where, automaton-like, he is no more than an ingenious piece of mechanism for revolving plans and calculating results, whose home sees him thoughtful, careworn and depressed; not the mechanic who drudges from day-dawn to night-fall to spare his boys the odium of learning a trade, and thrusts them into the overcrowded ranks of the professions wherever else their natural talents may lie; not the fashionable

mother, whose duties to society leave no room for fulfilling home duties, whose daughters grow up virtually knowing no mother's care; not the humbler housewife who cooks and scrubs and mends and washes while her girls croquet useless trifles, and thrum a piano, and fret their minds from rapid novels; none of these, who make so large a part of the mass. Rather the father who studies out patiently the ruling inclination which mother Nature bestows upon each of her children, who puts in his boy's hand the plane and the saw, the graver's chisel or the play-handle, the type-stick or the anvil, and only where actual distaste for manual labor exists and persistent longing for a different career is persuaded to make of him a clerk or a doctor or a lawyer, as the natural talent shall point; rather the mother, in whatever grade of life, whose girls are taught the practical points of housekeeping, who are impressed with the sacredness of the duties to come upon them by and by, who urges regard of health, cleanliness and open air exercise to enable them to fulfill those duties cheerfully and happily as God meant, who teaches that actual muscle-developing work is not incompatible with culture and ladyhood. And just here, blessings upon the inventor of rubber gloves, who has made this possible and yet does not entail upon us what no woman likes, rough and grimy hands, like those of our kitchen Biddies.

I can imagine no more pitiable situation than that of the shoddies, carried by one turn of wheel of fortune from bottom to top. Used to labor, and now the new-found dignity denies it; with no mental resources for passing the dreary time; with unfamiliar cares, like dragging mill-stones, with unfamiliar grandeur a constant scourge, shoved into the background by a rising generation, who are ashamed of their parents—poor people, let us pity them! Better that prosperity should never come than at such a sacrifice.

J. D. B.

Foolscap Papers.

The Shah at Home.

It was my privilege as Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of Persia, some years since, to become intimate with the everyday life of the Shah at home.

While there I was offered the freedom of almost all of the outside of the palace, and always availed myself of the offer.

There wasn't a day that I didn't enjoy the pleasure of looking at it.

They used to be so kind to me that they would allow me to knock at the front door as long as I wanted to, or longer. The Shah was very kind to me indeed. He never had me languid, and I shall always remember it.

I had every facility for becoming acquainted with the private life of the Shah, being on the most intimate terms with the chimney-sweep.

About seven o'clock in the morning, the Shah pulls a bell for his servant to come and wake him up.

He comes in softly and awakens him gently, and then opens his eyes for him, and also stretches and yawns for him for about fifteen minutes.

Then he washes his face with a dry towel and soap, and combs his hair with a very coarse comb, with the teeth out.

Then he carries him on his back to the breakfast-table, and drinks his tea for him, for fear it may be poisoned, and, if the Shah is tired, eats his breakfast for him, and a good deal of it, too.

Sugar-coated toothpicks and sheet-iron-lined napkins, rose-scented mutton-chops, cologne-scented pepper-sauce, gold-handled knives and forks, and other victuals of that kind, grace the table.

After breakfast, his servant smokes his pipe for him for about fifteen minutes, and reads the morning paper all to himself.

At eight o'clock the Shah takes a morning ride around the city on his wheelbarrow, for exercise—sometimes wheeling himself. In riding this way, if the man who wheels him should get unmanageable, or so badly scared that he should run off and break the wheelbarrow all to pieces, it would be against the Persian law for the Shah to be thrown to the ground; so, in case of such an accident, should he be pitched out, he is obliged to remain up in the air until somebody comes and helps him down on a doorman, or something of the kind.

Very often, in these morning rides, he drives around in a hand-cart with the finest gold-mounted harness on the fellow who hauls it. The Shah holds the reins with great expertness, going and having him at will, but never sacrilegiously speaking to him; so, in case the fellow should turn round and ask him for a chew of tobacco, or a light from his pipe, he would be in danger of walking home with his head in a basket or on his arm.

In passing along the street, every man is expected to stand on his head and hold his breath, so as not to breathe the atmosphere which he breathes.

If a deluging shower of rain should come up—and fall down—while he is driving around, it does so against the pleasure of the Shah, and at its own risk. He grinds his teeth at it and orders it to stop, and if it is any thing of a shower, it will.

If the sun shines too hotly upon him, all he has to do is to brandish his sword at it and tell it to "quit that so much more," and if it doesn't, then he treats it with sublime Oriental contempt, and slights it by not paying any attention to it: this makes the sun feel very badly, and it deserves its fate.

If a storm of dust rises, it knows well enough how to keep out of his eyes, whether it does so or not.

Cross-eyed persons are not allowed to look at him at all, because they make two men out of him, and he is a little superstitious.

The rest of the morning is passed on his throne, receiving foreign Embassadors and other dignitaries. The Court etiquette is very strict, and the person not conforming strictly to its rules is pretty apt to go out of doors in two parts, to learn better manners. You crawl in and shake his foot; he surveys you through the reversed end of a spy-glass to make you appear more insignificant in his sight, and you look at him through a pair of green goggles which are furnished you, for the unclothed eye is not allowed to fall on him during the hours of reception; and no one is allowed to talk aloud, the conversational tone being a whisper. When you are ready to go, you turn around and roll out.

I must say one thing just here to his credit—he never saw his own wood, nor milks the cows.

All the buttons on his coat are pure gold, with diamonds in the center. I did my best to get a few of them to start a button-string; they would have been so nice to begin with. I often watched for a chance, but he never laid his coat down and went away, and yet if he should happen to lose one button he would not make as much fuss about it as I would to lose one of mine. (My wife says certainly not).

At dinner he dines. He will not eat any oyster unless it has a hundred-dollar pearl in it, and he dearly loves to drink pulp. He is not very fond of coffee,

and only drinks six or seven cups. He eats beef rarely all the time, and never complains if he has too much. He does not look upon the wine when it is red—long. Whenever he drops his cup of coffee in his lap, or knocks over the bowl of molasses, or upsets the mush and milk, he gets so mad at himself that he immediately kicks somebody—they keep a man hired ready on hand for that purpose.

After dinner he takes a nap about two hours long, and wide in proportion, when it is against the law for plebeian lights to light on his face, or the window to fall down and wake him up. If the rest of the day is too short for him he stops the clock, and if it drags wearily on his hands, and he can hardly wait for supper, he makes the clock go faster.

At supper he sups. He generally retires about the time he goes to bed, and goes to sleep afterward. No night-mare dares to trouble him, nor bad dreams.

I have been to great pains to find out all these facts, but they can be relied on, more yet is necessary.

WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

Woman's World.

ALL ABOUT FURS.—I.

Now that the season for donning furs is at hand, we shall, in this and the succeeding number of the SATURDAY JOURNAL, present to our Woman's World readers a somewhat particular account of both the trade in these beautiful and comfortable articles of wear, and of the animals which produce the coveted skins. The subject is one of more than ordinary interest, and will be read even by men with pleasure.

The immense results of the fur trade in this country can be realized when a colossal fortune like John Jacob Astor's was founded on it, and the great frontier City of St. Paul has been built up by the traffic that originates in the enterprise of the trapper. New York being the principal fur market of America, a large amount of capital is invested in this business, which gradually expands with the prosperity of the trapper. The more thickly settled parts of the United States show a large decrease in the "catch" of furs; but new territories are constantly opening to the trapper, and he moves from year to year further North and West, the supply steadily keeping pace with the demand.

The wearing of furs in this country is very little affected by climate, but is almost entirely regulated by fashion. In Europe the state of the elements determines the extent of the call for furs. Notwithstanding the winters are growing milder on both continents, the demand for furs is increasing in this country and falling off in Europe.

The skins of each of the many fur-bearing animals come in fashion, advance in price with the demand, and, after a certain time, decline in favor and give place to some new favorite. The Russian sable, from its scarcity and determined monopolization by the imperial family and nobility of Russia, is ever the most elegant and costly fur, and is always the height of fashion, like the pure water diamond. During the reign of Edward III., was not permitted to be worn outside the nobility, was afterward thrown into the general market, and sold for exorbitant prices. Some years ago it was esteemed very beautiful for full-dress and evening wear, but at present ermine is unpopular, and may be purchased fabulously cheap. The much-despised skunk is having its day now, and is greatly sought by those wishing inexpensive but stylish furs. There are many interesting facts concerning the animals whose skins we hug about our throats and wrap around our hands.

The Sable is closely allied to the Marten, and are of two species—the Russian and Japanese. The latter is marked with black on its legs and feet. The Russian sable is found from European Russia to Kamtschatka. Its size is eighteen inches in length, exclusive of the tail. It lives in holes, burrowed in the earth. It is not prolific, seldom bringing forth more than three at a birth. Its fur is the most beautiful and richly tinted of all the martens. The color is a rich brown, slightly mottled with white about the head, and having a gray tinge on the neck.

Like the Sable is famous for its skin, as none are found that equal them. The fur of sable from this region is jet black, with points of hair tipped with white, which constitute its peculiar beauty. Eighty to ninety dollars is demanded by hunters for single skins.

The Ermine inhabits the northern part of Europe and Asia. It measures fourteen inches in length, of which the tail occupies four inches. It lives on all kinds of small quadrupeds, and is particularly fond of rabbits. The color of ermine in summer is a light reddish brown on the upper part of the body, and light-colored, or nearly white underneath. In winter, in the high northern latitude, its fur changes to a delicate cream-colored white on all parts of its body, except the tip of the tail, which retains its black color, and forms a fine contrast to the rest of the body. It is only in the coldest parts of Norway, Sweden, Russia, and Siberia, that the ermine becomes sufficiently blanched in winter to be of commercial value.

The Mink is found in the northern parts of America, Europe and Asia. Its fur is very valuable, but a few years ago the seal skins became fashionable. At present there is very little demand for mink, and its price is much depressed. Mink belong to the weasel family, are of dark brown color, have short legs, long bodies, and bushy tails. In this country there are two varieties of minks—one small, dark-colored, and common in the northern and eastern States and Canada; the other larger, with lighter colored, coarser, and less valuable fur, common in the western and southern States.

The darker colored variety measure from eleven to eighteen inches in length, and has a tail from six to ten inches in length. The European and Asiatic mink is a distinct species. Mink are rambles in their habits; they feed on fish, frogs, and mice. They will rob henroosts, and are found near trout streams, the fish of which they are very fond. Females bring forth six at a litter, and hide their young until half-grown, as the males of this species destroy their young when they can find them.

The publishers of the N. Y. SATURDAY JOURNAL, at the request of many readers, have commenced the republication of Albert W. Aiken's famous story, "The Wolf Demon." At the time of its original publication it created quite a sensation, and greatly increased the JOURNAL'S circulation. It is one of those stories which can be read even the second time with interest and entertainment, while those who peruse it for the first time are irresistibly carried on from chapter to chapter, absorbed in the mysteries of the plot and the skillful combination of exciting incidents. The "Wolf Demon" must be conceded a position among the most fascinating of Indian stories. The STAR JOURNAL is making its mark for the originality and ability which has characterized its tales and sketches, and among its announcements are several literary treats which can not fail to make the paper even more popular than heretofore. It is showing a determination to deserve the title of "star of the weeklies."

Comic Monthly.

Readers and Contributors.

TO CORRESPONDENTS AND AUTHORS.—No MSS. received that are not fully prepared in postage.—No MSS. preserved for future orders.—Usual MSS. promptly returned only, there being no room for the return of such MSS.—No correspondence of any nature is permissible in packages marked as "Book MSS."—MSS. which are imperfect are not wanted. In all cases our choice rests first upon merit or fitness; second, upon excellence of MSS. as "copy"; third, length. Of two MSS. of equal merit we always prefer the shorter. Never write on both sides of a sheet. The Commercial Note size paper as most convenient to edit and correspond, tearing off each page as it is written, and carefully giving it its full or page number.—A rejection by no means implies a want of merit. May MSS. unavailable to us be well worthy of use.—All experienced and popular writers will find an ever ready to give their efforts early attention. Contributions must look to this column for all information in regard to their acceptance. We can not write letters except in special cases.

We shall find place for "Working and Saving," "What Shall We Read?" "The Enemy of All," "A Home Sermon," "Blessed be Work," "Rise," "A True Common Story," "Too Proud to Fall," "The Uncle's Hair," "The Prophetic Picture," "Gabrielle's Crime," "A Sister's Art," "Witch and Witch," "Edmund and a Wife," "Mildred's Revenge," "A Chance Shot," "Loyal unto Death," "Belle," "Glen Allen's Christmas," "The Pearl in the Oyster," "Sorrels at Home," twelve essays by V. E.

To these contributions we say no, and refrain such as had stamps enclosed, viz.: "Life is one Sweet Dream," "A Bump of Fate," "The Student's Frolic," "Remember the First," "The Faded Leaf," "Seven Hours Suspense," "The Tragedy of the Tavern," "Old Bill Sikes Bet," "The Slonx Squaw," "A Storm at Sea," "The Beach-comber," "Never a Jack," "A Grain of Gold," "Not a Day too Soon."

PAUL V. We will not return MS. at our own expense. H. F. R. The magazines usually pay for matter. Each has its own scale of prices.

THOMAS C. We say no to the poem because it is not original, we think.

S. M. H. Dr. J. H. Robinson is dead. Miss Bradton is an Englishwoman. Several papers here copy her stories.

J. M. S. The story you name appeared in a Bohemian weekly. The story referred to is, we judge by her writing, unmarried.

E. M. New York. Consult a dentist about your teeth. Spraying the ear with an ear syringe charged with diluted carbolic acid and glycerine. Wear eye glasses procured from a weak condition of the general system. Tone it up. Nothing so good to make the hair grow as to keep the scalp clean. Heart disease is a little altered from the original shape, and made with a soil, high crowned, puffed silk trim, trimmed on side with loops and bows and finished with a hand and hand bow.

E. DELONG. The "Red Mazeppa" will cost 30 cents. Nos. 178 and 184 can be had, price 12 cents. President of the U. S. is, by virtue of his office, commander-in-chief of the army and navy of the Federal Government. The General-in-chief (Sherman) is acting commander-in-chief of the army.

MISS L. The present style of babies' hats is, to say the least, unique. Even for children the "Normandy" is "just the thing" this season. Our lady-like-gathered-around-the-face hats, with high crowns and regular little capes and strings are very effective as well as comfortable. In this latter style is a charming bonnet of light blue chenille silk trim, lined with green and brown, trimmed with green-grass and a bunch of pale pink buds; this style is suitable for a child from five to eight years old. For older misses the Normandy hat is the most becoming. Don't do to the hairdresser the original shape, and made with a soil, high crowned, puffed silk trim, trimmed on side with loops and bows and finished with a hand and hand bow.

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E. DELONG.

FAITH.

BY L. E. B.

Cast out into space,
For life and for death;
No bottom or base—
No limit beneath:
No ultimate bound
Above or around—
No wall at the side,
No roof overhead;
No cover to hide
Me, living or dead;
No refuge for Thought or for Sense;
Yet I do not despair
As I drift on the air,
Afloat in the boundless Immense.
In the depths of the night
Cometh faith without light,
Cometh faith without sight,
And I trust the Great Sovereign Unknown—
No finite or definite Throne,
But the infinite, nameless, unthinkable ONE.
I can not—I dare not define
The blessing He keepeth in store;
His purpose, I know is divine,
Nor need I know any thing more:
The what and the where and the when,
May well seem uncertain to men,
For the future, though ever so near,
Is a few of its secrets appear:
No favorite bliss may endure,
No definite hope be secure—
Not even Existence be sure,
But the something that ought to befall
Will happen, at last, unto all.

The Two Thanksgivings.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

THE shrill shrieking of a cold October wind added new cheerlessness to the already lonely farm-house—the Meriden farm-house; and, as pretty Lilly Meriden leaned her flushed cheeks against the window-pane, gazing with eyes that held a world of longing in the blue depths, it was little wonder she turned almost shivering away from the sight without, in all its leafless, dun dreariness, to the light and warmth and comfort within.

It was a pleasant room, with its bright red carpet, its walnut and cane chairs, walnut extension table that was covered with a crimson cloth. A gay Brussels carpet lounge stood opposite the open fireplace, where a huge armful of hickory knots blazed and sung, as the fragrant sap flowed out—farmer Meriden would not allow stoves in the march of improvement Lilly had begun since her return from boarding-school.

Lilly's sewing-machine stood between the windows; a bird-cage hung in one of them, a vine-wreathed moss-basket in the other. Books and papers, vases and little brackets were scattered gracefully around, making a sweet, homelike, restful picture; and yet, Lilly Meriden turned her face from it all, and covered its beauty with her dainty white hands, while something very like a sigh came welling up to her lips.

A light footstep in the next room was followed by the entrance of some one, and Lilly looked up, half vexedly, at the intruder.

"Oh, Grace, is it you?"

"Yes, dear. I came for a chat about the church fair, but I see you've the blues, so I'll postpone indefinitely."

A bitter sneer curled Lilly's lips, as she leaned wearily back in the chair.

"Church fair! Grace Hutton, how *can* you tolerate such nanby-pamby affairs? I can not, and will not. I am just sickened to death of this place, and all the clodhopping people. I am going away."

The flush deepened on her cheeks, and the glitter brightened in her eyes, as she spoke; and Grace Hutton's heart sank within her. Lilly was so headstrong, so reckless, so lovely! "But you might, in time, learn to be content, Lilly. And what will your father think if you go away? what will he do without you? and, oh, Lilly, where will you go? what will you do?"

The keen fear and dread in Grace's queries had no effect on the young girl's feelings. She only curled her lips again in defiant scorn. "Where will I go? and what will I do? Why, I'll go to New York as quickly as the cars can take me."

"Oh, surely no, Lilly! Why, my child, you haven't a relative or friend in the city who will take you in! Lilly, Lilly!"

Her warning tones only deepened the resentment and heightened the brilliancy of Lilly Meriden's face.

"There's plenty of respectable boarding-houses, and I know I can earn my living. Mr. Craven says—"

And then a cry, fraught with terrible fear, fell from Grace Hutton's lips.

"I thought as much! Oh, I feared it was his doings! Oh, Lilly, my darling little cousin, let me go on my knees and pray you to have nothing to do with that man! He is a stranger, and in all probability a rascal!"

"He's not," interrupted Lilly, sharply. "I'll not be lectured by you—a sort of second-hand sermon from Neal Lacey, I presume, who has sent you to me in his behalf!"

Grace shook her head.

"Lilly, Neal did not send me, or know I should see you. But you know no truer heart beats than his, and that he is crushed to the very ground because you have slighted him for this bold, handsome stranger."

"And I'll crush him more yet if he dares attempt to traduce my—Mr. Craven. You can just tell Mr. Lacey, for me, that I am going to New York, and that, when I am there, I shall probably see Mr. Craven often enough to convince him and all the rest of you that he is as much a friend as you, or Neal Lacey, or any one else!"

Lilly was angry now, and excited, and Grace softly slipped from the room; across the sere fields, where the yellow pumpkins glowed like suns among the withered cornstalks.

There was dreadful anguish in her heart; and a proportionately agonized prayer on her faithful lips.

A tall, bronzed-complexioned fellow, sufficiently stylish in his dress and air to pass for "aristocratic" to some eyes—eyes like Lilly Meriden's.

A black-eyed young man, who was well educated, very dashing and undeniably agreeable; who had known Lilly Meriden just six weeks, who had contrived to make her feel that she had been his friend always, as he was hers.

And this was Horace Craven, who had turned Lilly's head from its good sense, her judgment from its natural keenness; who had stolen her heart from Neal Lacey's keeping, and made Neal Lacey feel that all the sunshine was blotted out of his life; who had, worst of all, so influenced and biased her feelings, as to make her think her country home was simply unendurable; her country friends—whose pet and baby she had been from her cradle, where she slept when her girl mother died—a set of gawky, awkward animals, whose society was totally unfit for a bright, charming creature like herself.

And so, Lilly had been poisoned; and when, the next morning after her talk with Grace Hutton, her father wondered why dinner wasn't ready when he came up from the village, where he had just been attending to the mending of a Steinway grand piano for a pre-

sent to Lilly—he little knew it was because Lilly had gone; gone from home; "gone to New York, alone, to earn her living where there was life," as the hastily-penned note told him that he found lying on his spectacle-case.

Poor old man! I think Lilly's heart would almost have broken had she seen him, sitting all alone before the singing fire, with his white head bent on his cane, and the tears dropping, dropping in anguished silence from his shadow-haunted eyes.

But, the days wore on; the leaves withered, more and more; the yellow pumpkins lay in a nest of drifted russet blight; the mornings grew colder, and the nights came creeping on faster after the noons.

Thanksgiving was close at hand; ah, Thanksgiving could it be to that bent old man whose heart was breaking? But, kind-hearted Grace Hutton, in all her lovely womanhood—and in Neal Lacey's eyes she somehow seemed strangely fair, at times, when he could forget a dull pain at his heart—this noble Grace made the feast for him, and bade him remember even his cloud might have a silver lining somewhere among somber folds.

But, for all, it was a pitiful Thanksgiving at the Meriden farm-house, where the only thought was of Lilly, and almost the only word the old man spoke was "Lilly."

A small third-story back room, lighted by one window, against which the rain was beating in sullen, remorseless fury.

There was a worn carpet, a stove, chairs, table and bed in the room; and upon these, with eyes that were red and swelled with crying, Lilly Craven was looking; and then, with pitiful love, at a tiny sleeping girl on her bosom.

She was the same—and yet not the same—Lilly Craven, who was this day wondering if ever light and joy and gladness returned to those who had deliberately banished them?

And much it was she had to think of that rainy, cheerless November afternoon; just a year and a month since she had left her home for—what?

And in that haughty curl of the still pretty lips she recognized Lilly Meriden—purged of her high-headed pride and willfulness, but still what Lilly Craven might yet be, if hope and content came back to her again.

That had been a strange romance of hers; but, the end was come; and I think, as she read the brief letter that lay on her baby's dress, she honestly was glad of it.

It was from her husband—for Horace Craven's little game had been to marry her, in the plausible hope of a fortune when her father died. So Lilly had been his wife all that year past, and the little one on her breast was never to blush for its name.

Later, when her husband had learned old Mr. Meriden was not at all rich, he had "grown sick of his bargain," as he cruelly told his wife—this "Lilly" he had made so miserable.

Then he went away, and left her to find her living as best she could; then a letter came, the letter that Lilly was gazing at without a tear in her still lovely blue eyes; and it said Horace Craven was dead—had died suddenly at sea, and had been buried under the water.

So it was all over now, that strange, strange romance of hers. She folded up the letter, wondering if her dear old father would forgive her and let her put his granddaughter, little Isabel—after his wife—on his knees?

And Neal? was Neal single yet? Would he be a friend in her desolation? or, perhaps, more than a friend, as in the old days?

And then she went out into the pitiless storm that Thanksgiving eve, her baby in her arms, leaving the old life behind her forever.

The storm had given place to sunshine, that burst forth in a red-gold glory as Lilly Craven turned the latch of the kitchen door; in that quiet place no locks were needed where a faithful watch dog like old Towzer stood watch and ward.

Towzer had known her, and sprung in delight to her, licking her hands and crying in delight.

So she entered the dear old home that Thanksgiving-afternoon, to find it alone, and, oh, so inexpressibly uncared for. She laid her baby down on the lounge, and, with tears of thankfulness, went deftly about, touching and beautifying wherever she touched.

She brightened the sitting-room, as in the old days; drew the chairs and ottomans in cosy comfort; opened her sewing-machine, and let the glad sunshine come in the wide opened shutters. Her father's arm-chair, foot-rest and slippers she brought and left them in the same old corner by the roaring fire; then she began to get his dinner; she caught a chicken, and prepared it in true old-fashioned style; she hunted in all the old places and found cranberries, onions, butter, bread; she spread the table just as she had been wont; and then, while the fowl was roasting, and the viands cooking, she took her baby and sat down in her own low rocking-chair to wait for her father.

She had not long to wait. Just before the dusk he came, slowly and heavily, to the back door, not noticing the open shutters, nor Towzer's unusual antics.

He had not time to be surprised at the savory odors that greeted him; for, as he opened the door, the first objects he saw were Lilly and her baby!

It was all explained; every thing so gladly forgiven, and only for one deathly pain Lilly felt when he told her he had just come from a house-warming—Neal Lacey and Grace Hutton—the dark life faded quietly away; and the old-nod glided peacefully along from that second Thanksgiving day.

And Lilly is content; and, though the old sparkle has died away from her, I think she is a better woman—refined in fierce fires.

WILMA WILDE.

The Doctor's Ward:

THE INHERITANCE OF HATE.

BY MRS. JENNIE DAVIS BURTON.

AUTHOR OF "CORAL AND RUBY," "ADRIA, THE ADORPT," "THE CREOLE WIFE," "STANLEY'S PROGRESS," "CREOLE'S DECEIT," "MADAME DURAND'S WEDDING," "THE FALSE WIDOW," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VIII.

SHAPES OF AIR.

ERLE HETHERVILLE stood looking down into the small, dark, sleeping face, with a sensation new to all his previous life struggling at his heart—an involuntary recognition of that mournful influence which had preyed upon her life until the stamp of it was so plainly apparent in her face that it was always the first impression to strike an observer—a tender sympathy and a desire to extend protection to that little creature, who looked too child-like and delicate to buffet with any rough fortunes of chance in our rough world. The long dark lashes quivered and the lids went wide, leaving the startled dark eyes looking up at him in turn with an uncertain, doubting expression as if his

presence there was scarcely settled in her mind for a fact. His words assured her of it, after the space of a breath.

"I beg your pardon," he said, as her timid eyes fell before his bright, bold, blue ones, and though it was no new experience for Erle Hetherville to have the eyes of women droop before his gaze, the shy grace of this girl made the experience now a delight worthy of his accomplishment. "I would not have intruded had I suspected that the library already had an occupant. I can't hope my appearance has not disturbed you, since I am a witness to the fact, but I can and will make such amends as lie in my power by taking myself out of the way immediately."

"Oh, no, pray don't. I was asleep, I suppose, and not quite sure that I was not dreaming still when I waked suddenly and saw you there. I shall go right away, all the same."

"I will agree to stay only on condition—that I am not the cause of frightening you away. By the way, it would be only according to the law of natural recompense, though a rather queer coincidence, if you really had seen me in your dreams. I have met you in that misty region—let me see, something like three days or so ago."

He was lounging in the open door, with the slight form standing where she had risen first, a smile breaking over the little red mouth.

"It would not have been so strange if I should have seen you in my sleep. I am accustomed to dream of things which have made a recent impression on my mind, and your illness would suffice for that, Mr. Hetherville. Perhaps you dreamed also that I magnetized you back to slumber when you were yielding to wild fancies and going a fair way to bring on the fever which was dreaded? If you will be kind enough to let me pass, Mrs. Richland will be expecting me before this."

"After I thank you for the appreciated kindness. And won't you tell me whom Mrs. Richland will be expecting? If we are dwellers beneath the same roof for a short time may we not be friends as well?"

There was the sweep of a dress at his back, and the maid who shared her services between Ethel and the mistress of the mansion, stood there.

Mrs. Richland had sent in search of Miss Wilma, and would see her to arranging the *epagne* for the dinner-table before she came up-stairs? Mr. Hetherville made way for the little figure, and Miss Wilma disappeared from before his eyes, but leaving a vivid impression of the small, dark, pathetic face, lighted and brightened by its winning smile, lingering in his mind.

He sat down in the same deep chair of purple morocco and solid oak which she had occupied, and turned the leaves of a book with a scarlet mark fluttering between, that lay on the table at his side. He was there still when Mr. Richland made his appearance in the doorway, a few moments later.

"Why, bless my life, Hetherville, this is more of an improvement than I had hoped for. Below, and equal to Owen Meredith, a poet whom I thought men only affected when inspired by the presence of a lady. I wonder if these favorable symptoms are to be charged in any case to Ethel's agency? At any rate, I'm heartily glad of your rapid recovery, my dear fellow."

Not a man of fine tact, the host, but honest to the core, Erle Hetherville found himself struck with a guilty sensation as though he had been tried and found wanting in some deplorable measure by the side of the other's strictly honorable principle. With Mr. Richland's words had come his first recollection of his own mission here, the first reminder of how near he was, in all probability, to setting his seal to his own future destiny, and with the reminder came his first inclination to shrink the issue for a time—to hold to himself yet a little longer his indefinite sense of freedom. He turned his back upon the prompting with the quick recollection that he was not free, that he had been only less firmly and surely than by the marriage vow, with a sudden, fierce, angry contempt of himself that his devotion to Ethel should have wavered for the first at this supreme moment. He plunged into his subject almost without preface.

"Thanks, Mr. Richland. There's very much owing to Ethel, I assure you. It is with her permission that you find me here, waiting the chance of a few private words with you. You were a kindly approving party to our betrothal of six years ago, and I trust I am correct in assuming that you have not depreciated your favor of me. The extreme limit of the time agreed upon then is now almost reached, and I am here to urge the strict fulfillment of the old plans. I am anxious to make Ethel my wife at as early a day as you may approve and she agree to. I have not accustomed myself to this end for so long a time to urge unceremonious haste now, but I do beg that there may be no unnecessary delay."

"Spoken with the spirit I expected from you," responded Mr. Richland, warmly. "I should have been immeasurably disappointed at hearing any different proposition from you. And Ethel is of the same mind, boy? Well, then, there's no reason, not the slightest, for any delay whatever, except the small time necessary for preparations which must be made. Upon my word, Hetherville, I was never more rejoiced in all my life except once—when I stood upon the same ground you occupy now."

He wrung the young man's hand with all the warmth of his own approval, and that same guilty sensation returned to Erle that he was not more elated over the smooth, fair fortune which had attended his wooing and winning, if wooing and winning it could be called which had brought no exertion of his own into play, which had been attended by none of that painfully blissful uncertainty that hopes much, and is magnified to a heaven of felicitous rapture when certainty is sweetly and slyly yielded.

"If you don't object," said Mr. Richland, "to leave the management of the whole affair to me, I'll see that those same preparations are not dragged through the entire length some people consider necessary before they settle to even the contemplation of the final ceremony. Ethel is one of the best of girls, but not utterly free from the young man's general habit of dallying. I'll give a *carte blanche* for the trousseau, and have it ordered from the largest importing house in New York. After that there'll be no difficulty in naming an early day. I'll be grieved, deeply grieved to part with my dear girl, but, my own late experience to the contrary, I believe in early marriages. If you are to be all in all to each other, give the best part of your lives to your mutual happiness, I say. If you have any objection to my turning such an urgent generalissimo, don't hesitate to make the fact known."

"Not any objection in the world. On the contrary, you must know how great the obligation on my side will be." Yet now, as once before, his words lacked the fire, the hasty inspiration of the enthusiastic suitor who lives in the light of his innamorata's smile. The result of so much exertion on his part, a mental perplexity more than physical action, was the return of some slightly feverish symptoms that were triumphantly seized upon by Miss Erle as what might have been anticipated from the violation of her rule, as he was taken into unquested charge again and impressed with the necessity of resuming the invalid role in his own apartment for the evening. It was by no means so desirable a situation as his thoughts, that night, as it had been when the blue-and-gold of the walls had tangled into cloudy forms and had elfin faces limned in their midst—not so desirable as during the later days of his convalescence, when the world without and the world within that dainty chamber had no links of connection disagreeably apparent. In fact, the kind of night he passed, sleepless, until the late watches, and restless then with grotesque, distorted dream-forms haunting him, was not at all the kind of night that a happy young lover, just assured of the speedy realization of his dearest hopes, is supposed to pass.

Mrs. Richland broached the subject to Ethel that very night. It was one of their very quiet evenings below stairs. There had been invitations to balls and dinner parties and operas and select receptions to occupy every one of the six nights of the week, but these, with the exception of two or three, had been declined in deference to the invalid beneath their roof. This night with Lotte—that bright, brief star—at the New Opera House as an irresistible magnet of attraction, and two after balls, the Richland mansion escaped even a casual caller during the evening. These domestic evenings, in a household little accustomed to the kind, are commonly such tiresome affairs that no precedent is ever established sufficiently favorable to warrant their frequent repetition. This one was proving no exception, although, as Ethel had asserted once, they were seldom yielded preys to dullness even when thrown upon their own resources, for the members of this little group were knit in habits of companionship and consultation of each other's tastes more than is often found in our so-called first families.

Ethel had taken refuge at the piano and lost herself for a moment in the mazes of "Faust," while her brother sat over a chess-board, matching his skill against his wife's random, absent moves.

"My dear, my dear!" he remonstrated, after one of her least-guarded ventures. "I never knew you to play so badly. Why, you have virtually given the game into my hands, and you generally match me sharply to the end. See how easily I am going to gain the victory."

Mrs. Richland's white jeweled hand, coming up, struck the corner of the board, jumbling the pieces into a mass of mingling colors.

"There, what a pity! I have spoiled your victory; but, as you said, the game was all in your own hands. I am quite willing to yield the inevitable defeat."

"What a pity all women aren't as sensible as you, Gertrude! You are looking weary; I am afraid you are not as strong as you were—you are not appearing to hear the excitement of the season as well as heretofore."

"I am quite well and quite strong, but a little ennuied, I am afraid. If you will spare my further indignity, I think I shall retire early for once."

"By all means, do. Nothing like a good night's rest to bring you to yourself again, and bless me! the evening has gone rapidly, after all!" glancing at his watch, where the hands pointed at a quarter to eleven. "Good-night, my dear! No, don't follow for a moment, Ethel. I presume you are not in ignorance of a petition which was made to me, this afternoon."

"A petition, brother? Not—surely, not already?"—her troubled gaze turned upon him and the faint flush upon her cheek paling would have been evidence of her apprehension to quicker eyes than his kindly ones, but Mr. Richland saw nothing more than a rather sensitive young lady's embarrassment over a delicate love affair.

"Surely and already, and quite the proper action, just as I expected it on Hetherville's part. It was confiding enough to leave the whole affair of arrangement to my dictation, with the stipulation that there should be no delay. What do you say to placing as much confidence in Gertrude? Let her take the whole onerous burden of the trousseau, and when the preparations arrive at a state of general satisfaction, Erle and yourself can settle the important question of naming the day. What might be assumed as undue haste in another case will not be in this, after your long engagement. Hetherville claimed your permission to speak, so of course you are quite willing to agree. A noble fellow, Ethel, and one I shall be proud to claim as my brother-in-law."

"But I did not expect more than simply the understanding yet. I don't want to be rushed into a matter requiring so much careful consideration."

"Rushed, Ethel, after six years' standing choice? What would you women call taking your own time, I wonder? There, there, you, quite exhaust my patience with you. If it were not for my respect for Hetherville's feelings, to say nothing of his rights, and if my heart hadn't been set upon your marrying him at this time, I'd be tempted to throw up the sponge at this late date and leave you to maneuver the affair, for the mere curiosity of seeing what turn it would take to the end."

His voice carried a nearer approach to fretfulness in it than Howard Richland's general contentment often expressed. "After all, it might be the surest means of bringing a quick result. Why not throw the matter of a little time on the best side of the scale, I should like to know?"

The matter of a little time? Ethel echoed, in her mind, drearily. "It is no more than that, indeed, so why should I hesitate for the matter of a little time? And how selfish to grieve Howard, who has been both father and brother to me!"

She passed over the space between and touched her quiet lips to his forehead.

"I am willing to trust every thing to you, Howard. Forgive me for having seemed irresolute; you shall not find me so again, with two such steadfast examples in Erle and yourself."

She was gone at that, before he had time to reply a word. She paused at Mrs. Richland's door in passing, but all seemed still and dark there, and she was turning away in the direction of her own chamber, when a thread of light still further on caught her eye. She moved toward it, her light footstep lost on the thick carpeting of the passage. The thread-like gleam came from the crevice of Wilma's door, but with her silent touch pushing it ajar, it was not Wilma awake there, as she had expected to find. Seeing only the back of the tall, graceful form standing with a little shaded night-lamp dispensing a softened glow upon the sleeper's face, Ethel drew back and turned away.

"Like Gertrude," she thought; "always interested in the comfort of others."

She would scarcely have passed the little incident so lightly had she caught a view of the hidden face, the features locked in their usual marble-like repose, but with all the intensity of a strong consuming emotion concentrated in the wide eyes, dwelling with an absorbed fascination on that unconscious head upon the pillow.

ated from the violation of her rule, as he was taken into unquested charge again and impressed with the necessity of resuming the invalid role in his own apartment for the evening. It was by no means so desirable a situation as his thoughts, that night, as it had been when the blue-and-gold of the walls had tangled into cloudy forms and had elfin faces limned in their midst—not so desirable as during the later days of his convalescence, when the world without and the world within that dainty chamber had no links of connection disagreeably apparent. In fact, the kind of night he passed, sleepless, until the late watches, and restless then with grotesque, distorted dream-forms haunting him, was not at all the kind of night that a happy young lover, just assured of the speedy realization of his dearest hopes, is supposed to pass.

Mrs. Richland broached the subject to Ethel that very night. It was one of their very quiet evenings below stairs. There had been invitations to balls and dinner parties and operas and select receptions to occupy every one of the six nights of the week, but these, with the exception of two or three, had been declined in deference to the invalid beneath their roof. This night with Lotte—that bright, brief star—at the New Opera House as an irresistible magnet of attraction, and two after balls, the Richland mansion escaped even a casual caller during the evening. These domestic evenings, in a household little accustomed to the kind, are commonly such tiresome affairs that no precedent is ever established sufficiently favorable to warrant their frequent repetition. This one was proving no exception, although, as Ethel had asserted once, they were seldom yielded preys to dullness even when thrown upon their own resources, for the members of this little group were knit in habits of companionship and consultation of each other's tastes more than is often found in our so-called first families.

Ethel had taken refuge at the piano and lost herself for a moment in the mazes of "Faust," while her brother sat over a chess-board, matching his skill against his wife's random, absent moves.

"My dear, my dear!" he remonstrated, after one of her least-guarded ventures. "I never knew you to play so badly. Why, you have virtually given the game into my hands, and you generally match me sharply to the end. See how easily I am going to gain the victory."

Mrs. Richland's white jeweled hand, coming up, struck the corner of the board, jumbling the pieces into a mass of mingling colors.

"There, what a pity! I have spoiled your victory; but, as you said, the game was all in your own hands. I am quite willing to yield the inevitable defeat."

"What a pity all women aren't as sensible as you, Gertrude! You are looking weary; I am afraid you are not as strong as you were—you are not appearing to hear the excitement of the season as well as heretofore."

"I am quite well and quite strong, but a little ennuied, I am afraid. If you will spare my further indignity, I think I shall retire early for once."

"By all means, do. Nothing like a good night's rest to bring you to yourself again, and bless me! the evening has gone rapidly, after all!" glancing at his watch, where the hands pointed at a quarter to eleven. "Good-night, my dear! No, don't follow for a moment, Ethel. I presume you are not in ignorance of a petition which was made to me, this afternoon."

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timidity, her unaffected, child-like grace, her trusting, innocent candor and the reflection of the sadness and loneliness which had shadowed her life herebefore, Wilma's fine sense had detected his presence. Ethel, following the direction the dark eyes had taken, saw him standing there.

"Come in," she said. "No, don't stir, Wilma; Mr. Hetherville can accommodate himself on the sofa here without interfering with your light. Miss Wilde, Mr. Hetherville—you two are strangers I presume, though you should not be, with almost a fortnight since you have both been inmates of the house. I hope that you understand you are admitted here on sufferance only, Erle; this is our course of regular discipline of late. Wilma reads to me or with me in the mornings, and I play propriety for her when the time comes for her music or language lessons. Then I teach her a little of my wonderful proficiency in drawing—by the way, did you know that I sketch? It's one of my accomplishments taken up since our childhood days together. I'll give you convincing proof of the fact presently. And in return, Wilma does wonderful lace embroidery, and picks up all my fallen stitches so unobtrusively that I have been actually deluding myself into the belief of late that I am one of the most exemplary of careful mortals."

Mr. Hetherville bowing his acknowledgment to the introduction, sunk lazily into the place indicated.

"On sufferance though it may be, I assure you I would suffer any penalty rather than deprive myself willingly of so much unexpected pleasure. Don't let me, I beg of you, interfere with the usual exercise, and, indeed, you quite charm me with the description of that mutually beneficial companionship."

Both were thankful now for that open discussion of the breakfast-table, which diverted this encounter of the embarrassment each must have felt had it been otherwise.

"I don't mean that you shall interrupt," Ethel averred. "In that case, however, you are entitled to an equal privilege. I dare say you came in here to enjoy a cigar, and I shall certainly insist upon the indulgence."

With thanks for the permission, then, what an extremely sensible young lady! Did you really chance to know there isn't a more efficient way of silencing any of us masculine bipeds than by according such a liberty? Truth, I assure you. If Miss Wilde will favor us with any thing she likes from the poet laureate, I'll be happy to respond in the same way myself presently."

The reading was resumed, and Erle, blowing fantastic wreathing clouds about his head, watched them rise and fall, take form and melt away, while he listened to the clear, vibrant, expressive voice rendering the full sentiment of all that was to be conveyed. Watching the changing face between whiles and with all his own indolent sense of contentment come suddenly back to him.

"It never occurred to me before this to wonder what she may be in the household," he thought. "Miss Wilma of last night, I remember—Wilma Wilde. Odd little creature harmonizing admirably with the odd little creature she seems to be. Self-possessed under all her shy reserve, fine-featured and slender-handed and musical-voiced, Wilma Wilde, whatever she may be is no less a lady than my own unmistakably high-lit friend."

It was the pleasantest of hours that ever flew on incredibly swift wings. Erle redeemed himself of his voluntary promise by relieving her presently; and at last, when Wilma went away to oversee the arrangement of their lunch, recalled Ethel's laughing reference to her sketches.

"I shall surely pass the keenest of critical judgment," he said, walking across to the little sketch portfolio where it lay upon a neighboring table. "Tremble for the result if you care."

He turned the leaves with amusing comments, and Ethel spared them perhaps half her attention from the work she had taken up again, caring little enough for the really meritorious efforts to bear his light raillery with perfect indifference. His own affectation of ludicrous criticism changed suddenly to an involuntary low whistle as he took up one of the latter pages. Glancing up, she saw what he held with a vivid return of the color to her cheeks, a little mischievous smile breaking over her lips. It was a cartoon of a youth, with the faintest trace of a mustache over his mouth, on his knees by the side of a short-skirted, shimmering little Miss—the very evident burlesque of a first-love confession. But the humorous resemblance, the surroundings faithfully executed, came up before him as something different from burlesque; as very well remembered enthusiastic reality in fact, and a flush of annoyance rose to his forehead. No man cares to know that his own earnest feeling, even when changed by a remote distance to a boy's folly, has furnished amusement to any other. The slight annoyance was very quickly passed, however, and he met her eyes with a comical expression.

"I dare say you are right. It was a rather ludicrous affair as seen from our standpoint now," and folding the offending leaf, took calm possession of it. "A warning that I shall not fail in asserting my lawful degree of authority when the proper time comes."

"And be overruled by submission. That is the way it is done, I believe."

So they had passed into an easy recognition of their old familiar terms, and with no further reference to the future in which they were mutually involved, forgot for the time the disquiet which had separately haunted both.

Ethel uttered an exclamation of surprise as she glanced at the little gold watch at her belt, while they were lingering yet over the lunch-table as the bell rung a sharp unmistakable business summons.

"Your music-teacher, Wilma. How the day has gone! No, Erle, in pity to this child's timidity, I must excuse you from further attendance upon us."

The music-lesson was over, and the excitable little French professor gone again. Wilma was above stairs now in Ethel's company still, and in Ethel's room, her deft fingers looping up Ethel's sea-green dinner-dress with knots of rose-ribbon, when a tremulous sigh escaping her lips drew the other's observation. Ethel was always tenderly considerate, especially so to this heretofore-neglected young girl.

"You are not unhappy here, I hope, Wilma?"

Wilma's smile would have been answer enough despite the tears standing in the big, soft dark eyes.

"Unhappy! I am so wonderfully, thankfully happy, Miss Ethel, that it seemed so much joy couldn't be intended to last for me. So much kindness from every one in the house, I don't know how I have ever deserved or can repay it."

"Dear child, if ever unassuming worth deserved, yours is well deserved. There's not one of us could afford to lose you now."

Happy, happy change indeed from the loveless, lonely life of so few weeks ago! It was no new thing for Wilma's eyes to be suffused with grateful tears, or for her full heart to swell almost beyond containing her present joy.

There were a number of callers that evening, Lenoir and Crayton among them. The former had been at the house almost daily during Hetherville's first precarious week of illness, and he expressed his pleasure now in warm terms at his recovery, very much speedier than had been even hoped. Crayton, one of those true Bohemians who are at home in any society, who know everybody, and whose immeasurable impudence is counterbalanced by real genius of a certain sort, put himself forward with his sublime unconcern.

"My dear Hetherville, take my congratulations along with the rest. I didn't trouble myself to call when you weren't in a state to appreciate the attention, but I'll promise to make the omission when you get back to those old jocular bachelor quarters—if you ever do get back, I suppose I ought to add. What a wind-pipe you must be the lucky possessor of to come out so little the worse for the close embrace it got the other night. I suppose you saw the account of the affair. Our three locals dished it up in as many different ways, and I threw in sensational headlines by the half-column. What a blessing those headlines are, by the way! Saves us poor devils of pen-scratchers many a long, close column, and is a denance more inspiring to the eye. And by the way, I put forward a hypothesis—not in print out of consideration for Lenoir there, I am quite convinced, since striking it, that my proper sphere in life should have been in the detective corps rather than on the editorial staff." Mr. Crayton was a little given to enlarging upon his own merits, and magnifying the importance of his own position when outside the office.

"Upon my word, I wish you were in the corps, if that fact would return my missing valuables. Pray how would you trap the slippery rogues, Mr. Crayton?"

"My dear fellow, I would quite slip over all slippery rogues. Take the case in abstract now. Two young men are walking home through the streets. One turns off and leaves the other standing under the glare of a street-light. The first kills the echo of his footsteps as he goes, is lost in the darkness, darts around the first corner afterward, down one alley and up another one, and comes out breathless half a square ahead. There's time enough to recover breath, however, and—the remainder can better be imagined than described. Rather a remarkable hypothesis, is it not?"

Erle's eyes opened wide with indignant surprise.

"Remarkable, I should say, Mr. Crayton. I hope you have overlooked the fact that a breath of that sort might affect Mr. Lenoir very unpleasantly. I sincerely hope you have not referred to your hypothesis as a possibility?"

"Outside, certainly not. I have quite too much consideration for Justin as I just now remarked. But why not between ourselves?"

"Why, Mr. Crayton, I would as soon suspect any one—you for instance as Lenoir."

"And with the same acids to point the case so you might," responded Crayton, coolly. "Don't honor, with only that much incentive I'd throttle any man in the universe to rid myself of a reported successful rival."

He nodded familiarly toward Lenoir and Ethel at quite the opposite end of the long room, Lenoir with his elbow on some convenient support, leaning toward her and talking animatedly, Ethel with her face raised, listening intently with a rapt expression—such an expression as he had never been the means of calling there.

"And she caricatures my loveliness," he thought. "She even avoids words apart with me. It looks—certainly does look—"

Erle Hetherville's brows contracted ever so slightly. Something more than twenty-four hours previous to this he had wished almost for some disturbance of the too smooth course their love had taken. With what might have been the slightest foreshadowing of a storm ahead, he had a grievous sense of injury as it in an instant. He was immeasurably vexed at himself, and more than immeasurably vexed at Crayton when Lenoir came back to join them a few moments later.

"I've been demonstrating my hypothesis to Hetherville," said the imperturbable reporter—"the same I explained to you as we came down. Oddly enough he turns your advocate on the second."

Lenoir's frank laugh had not a measure of apprehension in it.

"I trust to Mr. Hetherville's better estimation to exonerate me from all suspicion. You carry your absurdities uncomfortably close sometimes, Crayton."

At that Mr. Richland turned about to face the young man.

"What is this I hear of you, Lenoir? That you aren't content grinding out your brains on a daily newspaper, but you must go to grinding them closer over some abstruse work on domestic economy? How do you get along with it?"

"Slowly, I am sorry to say. I am in need of reliable references and illustrative cases. The lack of a really good public library is a blemish upon the fair record of our twin cities."

"Suppose you should try a private library then—mine for instance. I've an idea you may find almost any thing there; I had it well filled in by a connoisseur last year. I'll be happy to place it at your free disposal."

CHAPTER X.

ONLY A TOUCH.

"CAN you tell me where Mr. Hetherville is, Cicely? Or if you would find him and ask him to step here for a moment?" Miss Erle looked a little flushed and slightly annoyed. There was a clear protest in the quivering ribs of her light blue dress, an indignant rustle of the stiff black silk, as she smoothed down its folds with a nervously impatient hand. She had gone down the stairs with a letter in her hand, on the look-out for Erle to post it. But Erle was nowhere visible, and in the round she had taken she had a glimpse of another view, which gave the excellent old lady a variable temper a dissatisfied turn.

The glimpse of a very simple little view at that. Justin Lenoir, who had swelled himself of the invitation given by Mr. Richland, and come unceremoniously to the house these mornings, delving deep into the invaluable mine of information the library afforded him, full two hours later than his usual time this day, had surprised Ethel alone in the room.

"I haven't five minutes for my pleasant work here," he said. "I hope to have one uninterrupted evening, this one, and came for a book of statistics I find myself needing. What an unfeeling resource you have here!"

"It is my favorite resort of the entire house. You may see evidences of our habit of frequenting it every day."

She glanced around at the tables strewn with books and magazines, with a little basket of flosses and lace foundation, tiny gold thimble, dainty needle-book and bright steel scissors, on a corner, vases on the mantle and window-brackets where fresh-cut flowers were odorously bright, the soft glow of burning coals behind the burnished bars of the grate, the coziest of home rooms where every appointment was massive and substantial without an attempt at display or undue ornamentation.

"And this is the first time I have had the

happiness of finding you here. I shall certainly curtail my own visits if I am the means of interfering with your occupancy of the room."

"I can assure you to the contrary, in all sincerity. Your early hours insure you privacy. I had just come in, and if there is any variation I am rather before my usual reading hour. You are that early bird here and gone before we idlers are roused to any interest in the day."

He secured the volume for which he had come, but still lingered talking in that easy, familiar fashion which spanned the distance between them and left him forgetful, in his presence, how vast, how unconquerable it was in all reality. It was probably not wisdom for him to forget. He had had his danger presented to him once and been warned against it; he had secretly accepted the warning kindly; he had put it away in his mind and covered it with the thought that if there had been a varying weakness before this, the chance of it even was all done with now. Hers had been the delicate nurturing of a life that had never known a care; his had been a struggle since his earliest recollection—a slow winning of his own way through his own merit. Could his true democratic principle have overridden that disparity there was another consideration to place her beyond the reach of his wildest aspirations, as the bright, calm stars are above the earth. She was betrothed, so rumor said, to the one who was her equal in every respect, worthy of her as any man could be, one toward whom she was drawn, too, by the strongest powers of that assimilation which may exist between noble, contrasting natures. Whatever temptation might have come to him, unguarded, would surely fall powerless now, hedged in by the full knowledge of how baseless any hope of his own must be, and by the loyalty of friendship which would never undermine the other's right be it ever so loosely held.

"If there be a weakness in my own mind still I shall live it down," he said, to himself, with a quiet stealing of his fine features, a resolute light in his dark eyes. "If I can not conquer myself what hope is there that I shall conquer the course I have marked? But I shall conquer—both."

And Justin Lenoir absolutely believed that he was in a fair way of doing it. Perhaps he was—how knows? Men of his caliber have an insuperable persistency of purpose, and a strong, fine fiber, a resolute nerve, that will carry them unflinchingly over the sharpest thorns of the way where their sense of honor is overstrained—hide them walk.

But to-morrow is quite out of the question, asserted Erle, knitting his brows, and looking his perplexity full into the old lady's face. "I'm promised for the ball to-night, my first night out, and to-morrow there's the dinner given here—you can't rush away at the very eleventh hour before that. What has put you into this impatience so suddenly, aunt Erle?"

Miss Erle had no intention of explaining to him precisely what.

"Speak of a woman's perverse spirit," she thought, "and then compare it with a young man of that sort; the first shrinks into absolute insignificance. Give him a hint that I disapprove of the intimacy he is building with Wilma Wilde, and he would immediately conjure up the idea of injustice done to her, and set himself to comforting her with added manifestations of his own interest. No, it would never do to give him a hint, any more than it will do to leave him here to pick a misunderstanding with Ethel, or to run the risk of his taking any warmer liking for Wilma. I think I can count on keeping him in Westmoreland for a fortnight, and when he returns he'll take up his old quarters again of course. And of course again he'll devote himself to his fiancée in his visits here, and with the holidays so near, and Mr. Richland to press the time of the wedding, it will all be brought through according to the programme."

So Miss Erle pleaded imperative duty as the cause of her recall, and no persuasions could shake her determination of turning her face homeward immediately. She consented, at a little hesitancy, to remain for the dinner party, and the time for their departure was fixed for the morning following.

"What sort of a crocheting has aunt Erle taken up?" mused Erle, in his own private disappointment. "Something, though she is so close over it. So I am not to escape Westmoreland and the villagers, after all? And I am to miss the German translations and the morning readings and the afternoon attendance, from this time out! How ducedly dreary the bachelor lodging will seem, after this!" and, sad to think, Mr. Hetherville forgot to insert a clause there felicitating himself upon the change from bachelorhood soon to take place.

Returning from the ball, that night, in those late or early hours verging upon the dawn, Mrs. Richland found Wilma waiting for her before the bright fire in her dressing-room.

"My child, you" she said, with an accent of reproval. "You force me to give orders that this offense shall not be repeated. I can not permit you to lose rest—your whose days are given to the comfort of all of us. This is Cicely's duty, not yours."

But Cicely has Miss Ethel to wait upon, and indeed—indeed—I would rather wait upon for you than not. You are so very kind, and I have so few ways of thanking you, of showing how grateful I am."

Mrs. Richland, with the red glow of the fire shimmering over her rich party dress, looking down into the wistful, tender face, with eyes which might have been looking away through the mists of long years, so absent and rapt were they, put out her hand and touched the girl's hair gently.

Wilma shivered. That touch, so quiet as to be almost imperceptible, had sent a painfully startling thrill to electrify her veins—a thrill so intensely vibrating, she could not have told whether it was most terror or delight, except that a chilling weight at her heart seemed to point it the first.

The absent look melted out of the lady's eyes. She sat down before her dressing-table and began slowly unclasping the jewels at her white, stately throat.

"Go to bed at once, Wilma," she said, quietly. "You may call at Miss Richland's door and ask Cicely to come to me when she is done there."

"Oh, dear, dear Mrs. Richland, I trust that you are not offended with me!" cried Wilma, all in a quiver of sorrow and remorse. "Indeed, I could not help it; I would not have angered you for the world. Oh, what have I done?"

"Dear child, you have done nothing except to express your own grateful little heart. But you are not here to take my maid's duties upon your busy hands. I must watch that they are not overburdened. Kiss me if you like, and good-night, Wilma."

Wilma kissed the cold white cheek turned to her and went away, only half comforted. In her dreams, that night, the same painful thrill of terror came back upon her, and she woke suddenly in the struggling dawn, with old Matthew Gregory's last words to her sounding again in her ears.

"You were cursed before you ever saw the

child! she doesn't look to have been so indulged before this, but she might be able to bear some mark of consideration from all of us." Miss Ethel seemed to fall in love with her at first sight, and it's more shame I say to any one that isn't taken with her gentle ways."

Miss Erle closed her lips grimly. She had not been amiss in kindness to the girl herself before this, had "been taken," as Cicely expressed it, by the gentle, winning manner which charmed all, but it did not at all accord with her present frame of mind that there should be no exception to the rule of a universal proclamation of Wilma's praises. She did not at all advocate the theory of love at sight, and rather than find any fault with her prospective niece-at-law was quite prepared to shift the burden of her present uneasiness upon Wilma's shoulders.

"Was it your letter you were wanting mailed, madam?" Cicely asked, folding away the last of the letters, "I can ask William Thompson to put it in the box if you wish."

"I'll not trouble William Thompson," Miss Erle answered. "I have changed my mind regarding the letter. When Mr. Hetherville does come in, please let him know I should like to see him here."

Miss Erle's mind had evidently undergone a decided change. She sat after the maid left her, looking forward into the fire, a troubled contraction in her forehead, her slim, wrinkled fingers tearing strip by strip through letter and envelope, dropping them bit by bit upon the grate. She dropped the last fragment presently, as, after a warning tap, Erle let himself into the room.

"Well, my dear aunt! Have I been neglecting my own old lady that she greets me with such a solemn visage?"

He drew a chair forward and dropped into it, throwing his head back with a smile and an affectionate glance of his bright blue eyes.

"When will you be ready to go back with me to Westmoreland, Erle?" she asked, abruptly, scarcely meeting his glance. "I've waited away much longer than I should."

"To Westmoreland? I thought you had given up—that you had concluded to accept the Richlands' invitation and remain here until after the holidays? I should have tried my persuasive powers before this had I not considered the matter settled."

"I've quite made up my mind that I must return home without any further delay. It was reprehensible on my part to hesitate at all. If it would suit you to-morrow, I will order my packing done at once."

"But to-morrow is quite out of the question," asserted Erle, knitting his brows, and looking his perplexity full into the old lady's face. "I'm promised for the ball to-night, my first night out, and to-morrow there's the dinner given here—you can't rush away at the very eleventh hour before that. What has put you into this impatience so suddenly, aunt Erle?"

Miss Erle had no intention of explaining to him precisely what.

"Speak of a woman's perverse spirit," she thought, "and then compare it with a young man of that sort; the first shrinks into absolute insignificance. Give him a hint that I disapprove of the intimacy he is building with Wilma Wilde, and he would immediately conjure up the idea of injustice done to her, and set himself to comforting her with added manifestations of his own interest. No, it would never do to give him a hint, any more than it will do to leave him here to pick a misunderstanding with Ethel, or to run the risk of his taking any warmer liking for Wilma. I think I can count on keeping him in Westmoreland for a fortnight, and when he returns he'll take up his old quarters again of course. And of course again he'll devote himself to his fiancée in his visits here, and with the holidays so near, and Mr. Richland to press the time of the wedding, it will all be brought through according to the programme."

So Miss Erle pleaded imperative duty as the cause of her recall, and no persuasions could shake her determination of turning her face homeward immediately. She consented, at a little hesitancy, to remain for the dinner party, and the time for their departure was fixed for the morning following.

"What sort of a crocheting has aunt Erle taken up?" mused Erle, in his own private disappointment. "Something, though she is so close over it. So I am not to escape Westmoreland and the villagers, after all? And I am to miss the German translations and the morning readings and the afternoon attendance, from this time out! How ducedly dreary the bachelor lodging will seem, after this!" and, sad to think, Mr. Hetherville forgot to insert a clause there felicitating himself upon the change from bachelorhood soon to take place.

Returning from the ball, that night, in those late or early hours verging upon the dawn, Mrs. Richland found Wilma waiting for her before the bright fire in her dressing-room.

"My child, you" she said, with an accent of reproval. "You force me to give orders that this offense shall not be repeated. I can not permit you to lose rest—your whose days are given to the comfort of all of us. This is Cicely's duty, not yours."

But Cicely has Miss Ethel to wait upon, and indeed—indeed—I would rather wait upon for you than not. You are so very kind, and I have so few ways of thanking you, of showing how grateful I am."

Mrs. Richland, with the red glow of the fire shimmering over her rich party dress, looking down into the wistful, tender face, with eyes which might have been looking away through the mists of long years, so absent and rapt were they, put out her hand and touched the girl's hair gently.

Wilma shivered. That touch, so quiet as to be almost imperceptible, had sent a painfully startling thrill to electrify her veins—a thrill so intensely vibrating, she could not have told whether it was most terror or delight, except that a chilling weight at her heart seemed to point it the first.

The absent look melted out of the lady's eyes. She sat down before her dressing-table and began slowly unclasping the jewels at her white, stately throat.

"Go to bed at once, Wilma," she said, quietly. "You may call at Miss Richland's door and ask Cicely to come to me when she is done there."

"Oh, dear, dear Mrs. Richland, I trust that you are not offended with me!" cried Wilma, all in a quiver of sorrow and remorse. "Indeed, I could not help it; I would not have angered you for the world. Oh, what have I done?"

"Dear child, you have done nothing except to express your own grateful little heart. But you are not here to take my maid's duties upon your busy hands. I must watch that they are not overburdened. Kiss me if you like, and good-night, Wilma."

Wilma kissed the cold white cheek turned to her and went away, only half comforted. In her dreams, that night, the same painful thrill of terror came back upon her, and she woke suddenly in the struggling dawn, with old Matthew Gregory's last words to her sounding again in her ears.

"You were cursed before you ever saw the

light. Yours is a dead life; if you ever pray for any thing, pray that you may never be the cause of a living death."

(To be continued—commenced in No. 104.)

RED ARROW.

THE WOLF DEMON;

OR,

The Queen of the Kanawha.

BY ALBERT W. ATKIN.

AUTHOR OF "ROCKY MOUNTAIN BOB," "THE MAN FROM TEXAS," "OVERLAND KIT," "RED MAZEPPA," "ACE OF SPADES," "HEART OF FIRE," "WITCHES OF NEW YORK," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XIX.

A STRANGE APPEARANCE.

"DERK the critter he's right in the way!" muttered the old hunter, as his eyes fell upon the figure of the savage, sitting in the pathway leading to the river.

Just then, too, the moon shone out bright and clear.

The position of Boone was one of danger. Although the shelving bank hid him from the view of any one that might be on the level plain above, yet he was in full view of the savage in the horse-path, if that worthy chose to turn his head and look in his direction.

"What in thunder was the use of that terrible critter—whatever he was—a-gettin' me out of the wigwam, if I'm goin' to be captivated ag'in, right on the jump?"

Boone did not dare to move lest the noise might reach the ears of the Indian.

"If the moon would only go under a cloud ag'in, I might be able to skulk round him; but then, the chances are ten to one that some one of the Indians in the village would see me. This is a pesky fix now, for sure."

Boone was in a quandary. To advance was clearly out of the question. To remain where he was would be sure to lead to his discovery and capture for the Indian might turn his head at any moment. There was but one course open to him.

"I must take the back track and try to get into the thicket on the upper side of the village. That will be difficult, 'cos the lodges above are nigh the river, and the Indians may discover me a-creepin' along under the bank. It's got to be did, though."

Just as the hunter came to the conclusion to try the desperate chance for escape that was yet open to him, a great black cloud came sailing over the face of the moon.

"The silver rays hid by the cloud, darkness again veiled the earth."

Boone could just distinguish the figure of the Indian before him, and that was all.

"By hokey!" muttered the scout, in doubt, "I ought to be able to skulk round that red heathen in this hyar darkness, if it will only last!"

And then the old hunter looked searchingly at the heavens above him.

The cloud was passing slowly along the dark-blue vault above. In its track came another cloud, fully as large and as black as the first.

"I kin do it," muttered Boone, decidedly. "I know I kin do it. I kin get past that critter afore the moon shines out ag'in. I'll risk it, anyway. It will be a narrow shave, but a miss is as good as a mile. So here goes."

Slowly and cautiously, on his hands and knees, the daring woodman crept forward.

He gained the level of the bank, and in his course commenced to describe a semicircle that would carry him wide of the squatting chief and yet bring him to the bank of the Scioto again.

Many an anxious glance the fugitive scout cast upward to the sky as he proceeded on his way.

The cloud was still over the moon, but it was rapidly growing less and less dense, and the silver rays were beginning to struggle feebly through it.

"By jingo!" muttered Boone, in dismay, although he still kept steadily on in his stealthy way, "most as clear as daylight in a minute. I shall be a worse fix than I was under the bank. I shall have to lie still and hug the earth. Then s'pose that heathen takes it into his head to return to the center of the village, or any of the other red devils come to the river's bank for water? They'll discover me, sure. Well, now, I am in a scrape!"

By this time the hunter had completed about half of the semicircle, and was some hundred paces from the Indian. A straight line drawn from the chief to the center of the village would have crossed Boone's path.

Suddenly, almost without warning, the cloud parted and the moonbeams shone brightly over the earth.

Boone crouched to the ground, lying flat upon his face. The back of the savage was toward him, so that, unless the Indian turned around, he was in no danger of being discovered for the present.

The breath of the scout came quick and hard.

Anxiously he looked up to the sky. The remainder of the cloud had broken into fragments, and these in passing over the face of the "mistress of the night," though somewhat dimming the luster of her smile, yet did not hide the light from the earth.

The second black cloud seemed, also, likely to break into pieces like the first, thus destroying the hope that Boone had of escaping from his present dangerous position when its mantle should hide the rays of the moon.

"Oh, 'tarnal death!" groaned Boone; "to come so far, and now to be stopped! If I could only get near enough to give that pesky critter a clean dig—but what am I talking about? I ain't got any w'apon. The 'tarnal heathen took good care of 'em for me. If this ain't a fix, then I never was in one."

Boone looked upward to the heavens, but there could not see any thing that seemed to favor his escape. Then

the dark object moved. Little by little it seemed to creep nearer and nearer to the savage, who sat so still in silent meditation.

The hunter rubbed his eyes; he could hardly believe that he had seen aright. But a second look convinced him that his eyes had not deceived him. The dark object that looked so much like the skin of a buffalo had moved a dozen paces or more toward the Shawnee chief.

A horrible suspicion seized upon Boone. For the first time he guessed what the dark form was, and had a suspicion regarding the silent stranger who had freed him from the bonds that bound him in the Indian lodge.

Cold drops of perspiration stood upon the forehead of the old Indian-fighter.

"Jerusalem! to think that thing has had its paws on me!" he muttered. "I ain't afraid of any human that walks the earth, but this—well, it's proved a good spirit to me, if it's a bad one to the red heathen."

Slowly the dark form drew near to the sage. Unconscious of danger, the chief sat silent and motionless as a statue.

The Shawnee brave knew not that the dark angel was nigh—that the dread scourge of his nation was about to add him, another victim, to the long list of those who had fallen as his prey.

"If my guess is right, there'll be a dead Injun round here in about two minutes."

Like one fascinated, Boone gazed upon the scene before him with staring eyes.

The dark form had crept quite close to the savage. It was now hardly a dozen paces from the chief.

A portion of the fleeting cloud passed over the moon; for a single moment the silver light was veiled, and the mantle of darkness cast over the earth.

Hardly had the gloom settled upon the plain, hiding the form of the Indian and the dark, mysterious object that had approached him so stealthily, from the gaze of the scout, when a dull sound, like an ax cutting into a rotten tree, came from the direction of the river; it was followed by a low moan of pain.

Boone shivered when the noise fell upon his ears. He guessed only too well what had transpired.

No other sound broke the stillness of the night.

The moon came forth again in its splendor. Again the silver light flooded the prairie, and made the night like unto the day.

Boone, with horror-stricken eyes, looked toward the river.

The Indian chief had disappeared.

Only a dark mass, motionless on the prairie, met the eyes of the hunter.

Earnestly Boone swept his eyes along the horizon. No form was in sight—bird, beast or human.

The scout felt his blood congeal within his veins with horror.

"I can't stand this," he muttered nervously; "I must see what's been going on. If I ain't wrong, my way to the wood is clear now."

Then Boone cast a rapid glance behind him in the direction of the village. He saw nothing there to alarm him.

Here goes, he muttered.

Slowly and cautiously the old hunter crept near to the dark form lying so still upon the prairie.

Some dozen paces from the shapeless mass the hunter paused.

"By jingo!" he muttered, "I'm almost afraid to look at it, yet I've seen death a hundred times, but I never seen a human killed by a demon before."

Then again the hunter went on.

The rays of the moon were shining down full upon the earth as Boone crept to the side of the silent form that paid no heed to his approach.

The sight that met the wondering eyes of the scout was strange indeed.

On the prairie, extended on his back, lay a stalwart Shawnee chief.

His head was smoothly shaven, except where the eagle-plumes twined in the scalp-lock.

The blood was gushing freely from a terrible wound in his head.

An awful gasp, the work of a muscular arm and a keen-edged tomahawk, told of the manner of his death.

And on the naked breast of the savage were three lines of blood.

The Red Arrow blazed there.

The Wolf Demon had marked his victim!

CHAPTER XX.

VIRGINIA'S GUIDE.

FRUITLESS was the eager search of Murdock and Bob after traces of the lost girl.

Giving it up at last as hopeless, the two returned to Point Pleasant.

Alarmed at the long absence of his daughter and the young stranger, the old General, with several of the best woodmen of the station, had earnestly searched for her.

The party had penetrated into the ravine where Virginia had been captured and the young man wounded.

The keen eyes of the woodmen quickly detected the marks of blood upon the rocks where the stranger had fallen; then they discovered the footprints of the attacking party. These they followed till they led into the broad trail by the river.

"It's no use, General," said Jake Jackson, who led the scouts, shaking his head sadly.

"The trail ends here. There's too many gone along this path for us to pick out our men."

"What is your opinion of the affair?" asked Treveling, anxiously.

"Well, it's just myer," said Jackson, slowly. "Your darter and the young feller were in the ravine. They were attacked by the three that we've been tracking. One of 'em wound—probably the young feller—and then both of 'em carried away by the ones that attacked 'em, 'cos 'thar's no marks of their footsteps."

"Think you that the attacking party were Indians?" asked Treveling.

"Nary Injun!" responded Jackson, tersely. "They're white as I am."

"What could be the motive for such a daring outrage?" said the old General, whose heart was sorely tried by the loss of his daughter.

"It's hard to say, General," said Jackson, dubiously, "unless you've got some enemies, and this is the way they are taking their revenge."

"I can not understand it," Treveling spoke, sorrowfully, and his brow was heavy with grief.

"If my Virginia is lost, it is the second blow of the kind that has fallen upon me."

"The second?" said Jackson, in wonder.

"Yes; my eldest daughter, Augusta, was stolen from me years ago. She wandered forth beyond the borders of the settlement, one bright summer's afternoon, and never returned. Whether she was eaten up by the wild beasts that roamed the forest, or fell beneath the tomahawks of the hostile Indians, I never was able to discover. And now my second daughter, all that I have left to me in this world, is gone. My lot is hard to bear, indeed."

The old man bent his head in agony. The rough woodmen looked upon him with pity. Fathers themselves, they knew how bitter were the feelings of the old man.

"Well, General, I don't know what to do about this matter," said Jackson, thoughtfully. "I s'pose there's nothin' to be done just at present but to return to the station, and then get up a party to search the country around thoroughly. It's bad that it happened just at this time, too, 'cos we've got an Injun war on our hands, and we ain't got any too many men to fight the red devils; but I guess we kin spare a few to help you out of this difficulty. I'll go for one."

"And I," said another of the woodmen.

"And I," chimed in the rest of the little party.

And so it was settled that first they should return to the station, make there all needful preparations, and then set out in search of the girl.

Silently and sorrowfully they took the trail leading to Point Pleasant.

To return to Virginia.

Quietly she remained in the little log-cabin, waiting the return of the stranger who had rescued her from the terrible peril that she had been placed in.

Virginia had little idea that she had escaped one danger only to encounter another more terrible still.

Innocent and unsuspecting, she readily believed the words of the stranger.

So patiently she waited in the lonely cabin for his return to conduct her to Point Pleasant, and restore her once more to the arms of her father.

One sad recollection was in Virginia's memory—the untimely death of the young stranger to whom she had freely given all the best love of her girlish heart.

Sorrowfully she mourned for his death, as the memory of his handsome face and frank, honest bearing came back to her. He was the first and only man that she had ever loved.

"Oh, my fate seems bitter indeed!" she murmured. "Why did Providence ever bring us together and implant the germs of love in our hearts, if it was fated that we should be torn apart thus rudely? I thought that we should be so happy together. I looked forward to a bright and blissful future. But now the past is full of dread memories, and the future does not show one single ray of sunlight to brighten up the darkness of my life."

If Virginia's thoughts were so dark and gloomy now, with the prospect of being restored to her home and friends before her, what would they have been had she known the truth? Had she guessed that she was in the power of a man more terrible and merciless in his nature than any red savage that roamed the wild woods?

It is, perhaps, a mercy sometimes that we can not guess the future.

Virginia had been in the lonely cabin some five hours, wrapped in these gloomy thoughts. Then the man who had called himself Benton stood again upon the edge of the clearing.

"So far, so good," he muttered to himself, in joy, a smile lighting up his dark face as he spoke. "Now to take the bird from this cage and place it in one more secure; and then, that task done, to visit my foe, let him know the vengeance that has already fallen upon his head, and the more terrible vengeance that is still to come. It has taken years to ripen it, but the fruit will be bitter indeed."

Then he crossed the little clearing and entered the cabin.

Virginia started up with joy as she saw who it was.

To her the dark-browed stranger was as a guardian angel—one destined to protect and save her from the terrible danger that menaced her.

"You have seen my father?" she cried, anxiously.

"Yes."

"And he is coming to save me?"

"No."

"Not coming?" and Virginia looked the surprise she felt.

"No; your father is quite sick, and unable to leave the station."

"My father ill?"

"Yes; the fearful anxiety that your unexplained absence caused him came near resulting fatally; luckily, my timely arrival with the news of your safety gave him hope, and enabled him to fight against the illness that threatened his life."

"Oh, my poor father!" murmured Virginia, sadly.

"Do not be alarmed. The danger is over now," Benton said. "I shall soon restore you to his arms, and your presence will do him more good than all the medicine in the world."

"Then you will take me to him soon?"

"Yes, almost immediately."

"Are my friends near at hand?" asked Virginia, looking anxiously toward the door as she spoke, as though she expected to see the stalwart form of Jackson, or some other friend of her father, filling the doorway.

"No."

"Will they be here soon, then?"

"Your father did not think that it was wise to send a small party after you, and could not send a large one as the settlement is in danger of being attacked by the Indians at any moment; so it was decided that it was best for me to return alone and conduct you to Point Pleasant. The danger of two being discovered by the savages is less than that attending a larger party. And if the Indians should discover us, no party that could be spared from the settlement in this hour of peril would be sufficient to withstand their attack."

This appeared reasonable enough to Virginia.

"I am ready at any moment," she said.

"We will set out at once, then," Benton replied, moving to the door as he spoke.

"The sooner the better," Virginia cried, earnestly. "I wish that I could fly like a bird to the side of my dear father."

"We are not far from the station; it will only be a few hours' travel through the wood. A party from the settlement will meet us at a place fixed upon by your father and myself. If we can only reach that spot without being discovered by the lurking savages, all will be well."

"Let us hasten at once," said Virginia, in a fever of impatience.

The blows of misfortune were falling thick and heavy upon her head. First, her lover struck down lifeless at her feet; then her capture by the hostile red-skins; and now, the dangerous illness of her only parent.

Tread cautiously and lightly," said Benton, in warning, as they passed through the door of the cabin. "We can not tell which bush or tree may conceal a lurking Indian. The very leaves of grass beneath our feet may hide a foe."

"Oh, I will be very careful!" said Virginia, earnestly.

Then the two set out upon the dangerous journey.

Silently on through the wood they went.

After proceeding for a short time, Virginia began to wonder at the manner in which the stranger led the way. A girl reared on the border, she was somewhat familiar with border

What astonished her was, that the man who was guiding her was proceeding straight onward, apparently without caution, and as if he

had no fears of stumbling without warning upon any red foes.

Virginia's thought, however, was that he knew the path so well, and had passed over it so recently, that he did not apprehend danger.

Soon they came to a place where the bank stooped down to meet the river. They had followed the Kanawha in their course.

From the thicket that fringed the stream, the guide drew a "dug-out," and by its aid the two crossed the river. On the opposite bank, Benton again concealed the "dug-out," in the bushes.

And then again they proceeded on their way, following the broad trail that led to Point Pleasant.

But in a half-mile or so, Benton left the trail and struck into the woods to the right of the path.

Virginia followed in wonder, for she knew well that they had left the direct road to Point Pleasant and were going away from, instead of approaching the station.

CHAPTER XXI.

IN THE TOILS.

ALTHOUGH wondering at the path that the stranger was pursuing, yet Virginia followed him for a short time in silence.

Deeper and deeper into the thicket went the stranger.

Virginia began to fear that he had mistaken the way. She resolved to speak.

"Have you not made a mistake in the path?" she asked.

"No," he replied, halting.

"But this is not the road leading to the settlement. We should follow the trail running parallel with the river—the trail we just left."

"Yes, I know that that is the direct road," he answered; "but we are obliged to make a wide detour here to escape the Shawnees. There is a large body of them ambushed by the trail a short distance below here. We are to make a circle to avoid them, and will come upon the trail again in due time. Do not fear; I will guide you safely. I know these wilds well. There is not a foot of ground between here and the Ohio that is not as familiar to me as my own hand. It is many years, though, since I have traversed these woods, but I've a good memory and am not likely to go astray."

"I feared that you might have made a mistake in the path, therefore I spoke," said Virginia, perfectly satisfied with the stranger's reasons.

On went the stranger again, and although he had imposed caution on the girl, he did not seem to use much himself, for he went straight onward as before, without seeming to fear danger.

For a short time only did the guide continue in a straight path, for soon he commenced a zigzag course; first to the right, then to the left, then apparently he retraced the very path that they had come; then turned abruptly to the right again, went on a little way, then bent his course to the left.

Virginia was puzzled; she had been able before to tell the way in which they had been proceeding; but now, after all this turning and twisting, her brain was bewildered, and she could not guess whether she was going straight to Point Pleasant or in the opposite direction.

If the design of Benton had been to bother the girl by the abrupt turns he had made, and to confuse her as to the direction in which they were bending their steps, he had succeeded admirably.

Virginia followed without a word. She was fully trusting the man who was guiding her.

"We will soon be at the meeting-place appointed," said Benton, after an hour's weary tramp through the almost trackless wilderness.

"I am so glad," replied the girl, "for I am getting sadly tired."

"You will have rest enough, soon," said Benton. And it was well that Virginia did not see the dark smile that shone on his features and lit up his evil eyes.

A few steps further on and the two came to a little glade in the forest.

"This is the place," said Benton, stopping in the center of the glade.

Virginia looked around.

The dense forest surrounded them.

No sound broke the stillness of the virgin wood.

The quiet of the grave reigned within the forest glade.

"I do not see any one," said Virginia; and, despite herself, a feeling of apprehension stole over her.

The quiet of the forest seemed ominous of evil.

"They are near at hand," said Benton, with a peculiar smile.

For the first time, Virginia saw the evil look in his face. His words, though apparently harmless, filled her with terror.

"Where are they?" she asked, a heavy weight upon her heart as she spoke.

"Shall I call them?" Benton questioned, surveying the girl with an air of triumph.

"Yes," Virginia said, slowly.

With a mocking smile, Benton turned to where a dense clump of bushes—an outpost of the thicket—had planted itself upon the margin of the glade.

Virginia watched him with earnest eyes.

A dim presentiment of danger filled her soul.

Danger! yet what that danger was, she could not guess.

Two words came from the lips of the man who had acted as Virginia's guide.

Two words that struck a chill of horror to the heart of the girl.

Yet the meaning of those two words she could not understand.

The two words were spoken in the Shawnee tongue.

Then forth from the thicket, in obedience to the summons, came two dark and stalwart forms.

Life was in the forest despite the gloom and silence!

One single glaze Virginia gave, and then, with a cry of mournful agony, she fell senseless to the ground.

The shock was too great to bear, and loss of consciousness came like an earnest friend to drive away the terror that was chilling the heart of the hapless maid.

And now we will return to the station at Point Pleasant.

The party who had been in search of the girl had returned. They were to set forth again on the following morning, to try and discover, if it were possible, what had been the fate of the General's daughter.

Treveling himself, bowed down with agony, sought the shelter of his dwelling.

The old man's heart was heavy with woe.

The twilight had come. Treveling, busy in thought, had not noticed the coming darkness, when he was suddenly aroused from his abstraction by the abrupt entrance of a stranger.

Treveling looked at his visitor in astonishment.

The man was a stranger to him. He was a muscular fellow, habited in the usual border fashion of deer-skin.

"You are General Treveling?" the stranger asked.

"Yes," replied the old man, "that is my name."

"My name is James Benton; I am a stranger in these parts, though some years ago I resided hereabouts."

"Your face seems familiar to me," replied Treveling, with a puzzled air, "yet I can not remember to have ever known a man who bore the name you give."

"Your memory may be at fault," said the stranger, coldly.

"It is rarely so, but still it may be as you say," replied the General, who felt sure that he had seen the stranger's face before.

"You and I, General, are old acquaintances," said Benton.

"We are?"

"Yes."

"It is very strange then that I can not remember your name—I mean, that it does not seem familiar to me."

"A man's face is much more easily remembered than his name."

"That is very true," replied Treveling. "At what time in the past did I ever meet you?"

"Do you remember Lewis' expedition, in Danmore's time?"

"Yes."

"When he whipped Corn-planter at the head of the Shawnees, Mingoes and Wyandots in the battle of Point Pleasant?"

"Yes," again replied the old man; "I commanded a division under Lewis in that fight."

"No one knows that better than myself," said the stranger, with a peculiar smile; "I served under you."

"Ah, were you in the battle of Point Pleasant?"

"No."

"How was that?" asked Treveling, in astonishment; "my division was in the hottest of the fight."

"I left your command before the battle took place."

"It is strange that I do not remember of ever hearing your name before, but your face certainly is familiar. Well, sir, as an old comrade in arms, I am glad to meet you. You are welcome, sir, to make my house your home while you remain at the station. I can give you an old Virginia welcome, though I am afraid that I can not play the part of the host as well as I ought to, for I am suffering now, sir, under an affliction that has sorely tried me."

And the old soldier heaved a deep sigh as he spoke.

"You refer to the loss of your daughter?"

"Yes, sir."

"It is a heavy blow."

"Ah! none but a father's heart can feel how heavy such a blow is. She was my only child, sir; the pride of my old age, and now she is taken from me. I am but an old and withered oak; the support and love that bound me to earth is gone, and I care not how soon I receive the summons that bids me appear before the Great Commander above."

The tone in which the old man spoke would have touched almost any heart and made it sympathize with his sorrow. But the heart of the dark-faced stranger only thrilled with fierce joy as he listened to the words of the old man.

"Your only child, I think you said?"

"Yes," replied Treveling, in wonder, "my only child?"

"But that? If my memory does not deceive me, in the old time, when I served under you, you had two daughters."

"Yes, you are right," replied Treveling, "but the eldest of the two, my bright-eyed Augusta, strayed into the woods one day and never came back. She was but a child then; and now the other, my Virginia, she, too, is gone, and in the self-same manner as her sister. That is what makes the blow more terrible."

"You never discovered any traces of the first?"

"No," Treveling answered, sadly.

"And now no traces of the second?"

"You speak only the cruel truth."

"Cheer up, General; I bring you news of your second daughter!"

"You do?" cried the old man, eagerly.

"Yes; by chance I discovered something in the forest that revealed to me her fate."

"Only give me some clue by which I may find my child and I will go down on my knees and bless you, sir!" exclaimed the old soldier, excitedly.

"Put on your hat and walk with me a short distance. The moon is bright, and I will tell you all I have discovered. It is a terrible affair, and I fear to speak within walls."

Eagerly Treveling followed Benton from the house.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 190.)

TO ADVERTISERS.

A few advertisements will be inserted on this page at the rate of fifty cents per line, nonpareil measurement.

NEW BOOKS.

ARKANSAS KIT; OR, THE RIVER SPRITE'S CHOICE. (BEADLE'S DIME NOVELS, No. 295.) By W. J. Hamilton. Arkansas, or the Arkansas Kit, is a borderman of the best type, misnamed in books but wise in the lore of the trail, the rifle, the canoe and the cunning savage—a friend in time of need, and a terrible foe. He here lends a hand of seven into the dangerous country of the Crowfoot, and "stays thar" until he is ready to leave, but has a most exciting time of it. When he does get out of it, there is a young woman in the canoe! It is an exceedingly lively, humorous and intensely exciting tale of personal adventure and hazardous enterprise in a wild region, whose personal will afford unqualified delight.

DEATH-TRAILER, The Scourge of the Plain. (BEADLE'S DIME NOVELS, No. 296.) By Joe E. Badger. Joe, in the "Lean Chief" the death of the brave Sam Grimes forms a sad episode to that exciting story, in which Old Kit Duncan plays a hero's part. In this novel the old scout is the murdered man's avenger, and pursuing the Greys into their very homes and haunts, he shows what a man can become who gives himself up to the guidance of one powerful passion! The romance is one that all who read it will sit aside to read again, and place it in their library of books worthy to be preserved.

THE SLAVE SCOUT; OR, THE PROGRESS OF THE SECRET CHAMBERS. (New and Old Friends, No. 14.) By Judge Wm. Jared Hall. This splendid romance from Judge Hall's pen is one of the finest of historical novels in the whole range of American fiction. It is history and something more—holding the reader in a spell of delight and wonder, and giving a vivid picture of the great persons and events of Cortez' conquest and Montezuma's fall. This beautiful form of its issue will give it immense currency and popularity.

BALL-ROOM COMPANION and Guide to Dancing. Hit upon the Ball-room. Ladies' Ball-room Toilettes, Gentlemen's Dress, Special Hints of Conduct, together with explicit directions how to perform the various Round Dances, Quadrilles, and New Figures. Also, hints on Private Parties, Sociables, Maquarades, Promenade Concert

IN WINTERTIME.

From its cold lair in icy caves
The chilly north wind blows—
Sad music of the waning year,
So musing on the waning year,
It means about the builded towns,
It sweeps along the plains,
We shudder as we list, and all
With harts the broken pines.
Ah, yet shall winter lose its cheer?
Why should it dash the cup
Of happiness from every lip?
Though all your pumps freeze up!
Behold it draws the social band
About the evening fire,
Which grows so very dear because
The price of coal is higher.
With leafless limbs bared to the blasts
Which was so wont to please,
But oh, how bright the morning fires—
When made by other hands!
A strength we never knew before
We feel upon us steal,
The peace that winter brings is ours—
And chilblains on our heel.
We miss the scent of summer flowers
Which was so wont to please,
But sweeter now is the rare smell
Of early saunas.
Away, the winter-stricken heart
That pours itself in sighs!
How do our spirits spring aloft—
In falling on the ice?
We miss the summer's light and warmth,
Its memories we mourn,
Yet now how comforting it is
To put on socks of yarn;
To glide upon the ringing steel
Across the frozen lakes,
And feel it is a blessed boon
That we have buckwheat cakes.
How sweet to skim the glittering snow
With skis which echo far,
And catch the pure and wholesome air—
And a first-rate catarrh!
How do we bless with thankful heart
The season of the snows,
And feel not one regret except
That snowball on our nose?
Then give to me what'er the reign
Of snowtime choose to send,
If the season best when one
Can freeze out a friend.
I will not sigh whatever comes,
Nor pine for what is gone,
For I will put my sorrows off—
And lots of blankets on.

The Mad Chief.

BY LAUNCE POYNTE.

"Wahoneta great chief," said the savage, swelling with vanity, as he swept away from the door of the cabin, in great dudgeon; "scaps good for Injun—you see 'fore long—squaw no good, anyhow."

Then he leaped on his horse and galloped away, leaving little Etta Harvey trembling at his sudden change of manner.

Wahoneta was a Klamath chief, the last of his tribe; and many a time had he met with generous kindness from Dick Harvey, the Oregon settler. When Wahoneta came by their cabin, two winters before, from a long, unsuccessful hunt, nearly starving, it was Dick Harvey and his pretty little wife, Etta, that fed and warmed the poor savage, and saved his life, and that of his squaw and children. Ever since then the Klamath had been devoted to Dick and Etta. His gratitude had known no bounds. Dangerous and unsettled as the country was on the southern borders of Oregon, Dick Harvey had experienced nothing but kindness from Klamath and Modoc alike.

But on that memorable morning Harvey was away, and Wahoneta stalked into the cabin with two fresh scalps at his girdle, both of them with long hair of light flaxen color. Little Etta, horror-stricken, questioned him, and found, from his insolent manner, that he had been drinking. At last, when she ventured to remonstrate with him on the subject of killing women, which he had evidently been engaged in, from the appearance of the scalps, he suddenly burst out as we have seen, and galloped away from the cabin, yelling like a maniac. And poor little Etta remembered that Dick was off on a three-days' hunt.

A thin, flickering column of blue smoke rose up from a black pile of charred timber, which covered the sight of what had once been the cabin of Dick Harvey. The silent moon looked down on the scene, and on the approaching figure of a weary horseman, whose animal plodded along under a heavy weight of game, slung before and behind the saddle.

A little swell on the prairie concealed the picture from Dick Harvey's view, till he came upon it within fifty feet. Then on a sudden his weary attitude changed for one of amazement and consternation, and he leaped from his horse and rushed toward the smoking ruins, uttering a low groan.

It was indeed too true. His cabin was in ashes, and not a living creature left in or near it. Even the stable, where he had left a single cow, and the little sheepfold, were burned down, and the burnt carcasses of the animals roughly hacked, as if they had been roasted whole and half devoured, showed at once the character of the disaster that had overtaken the settler.

"Indians!" ejaculated the stricken man. "But where is Etta? And oh, my God, where is my little one?"

He had not far to seek. Half hidden beneath a charred log he found the lifeless corpse of the young wife and mother, and when he had looked at it but a single moment, he uttered a fearful oath.

"Now by the eternal God that rules the heavens!" cried the unhappy man, sinking on his knees. "If I do not avenge this foul outrage may I never see white face again!"

A hasty grave and a short, fearless struggle with his agony, and Dick Harvey was away on the trail of the murderers.

Once more the full moon rises slowly in the almost cloudless sky, to shine upon the perfectly level sea of prairie that stretches between Oregon and California. Not a hillock disturbs the monotony, and the plain is absolutely bare of vegetation, save for a short withered carpet of dry grass, over which prowl a few half-starved coyotes.

Who is this that comes spurring fast over the plain, at the full speed of his tired horse, ever and anon glancing back over his shoulders as if apprehensive of pursuit?

As he comes nearer, we can see at once that it is Wahoneta the Klamath chief, who, a short month ago, murdered his benefactor when mad with drink, and incited to fresh deeds of atrocity by his Modoc fellow-villains. Now Wahoneta is all alone on the desolate plain, and yet at every few strides of his horse he turns his head and looks fearfully into the empty air behind him, only to lean forward again on his horse's neck and urge the jade beast to fresh efforts, and the horse, urged by the fresh efforts of his master, gallops on.

At last he halts in his mad flight and begins to talk to himself.

"Who calls Wahoneta a coward? If a warrior says it, I will eat his heart. The great spirit is after me, and who shall blame me for fleeing from his face? Firewater alone will drive him away, and I have none. All gone since that night when—"

The mad Klamath laughs savagely and rattles a dry, dusty canteen at his side. The

glare of frenzy is in his eye, as he looks back once more over his shoulder, in the same fearful manner. Then he utters a triumphant laugh and shouts:

"The white face is gone, and Wahoneta is free. Who says he killed the pale-faced woman? She was good and beautiful, and her lips were sweet even in the arms of hate, but I killed her because she would not leave the pale-faces to be an Indian warrior's wife. Let the white dog, her husband, look to himself when he meets the Klamath chief."

And Wahoneta uttered a wild war-whoop, that sounded afar over the silent prairie, and frightened away the sneaking coyotes that lurked around at a respectful distance.

Hardly had he finished it, when he pulled up his horse on its haunches with terrified abruptness and uttered a low, wailing cry of mortal terror, while he stared with dilated eyes at an object before him.

A faint white shadowy form, so transparent that the forms of the snarling coyotes could be plainly seen through its outline, stood before his horse's head, waving its arms forbiddingly, and the white figure bore the face and eyes of the murdered Etta Harvey.

With a frantic scream of terror the unhappy maniac wrenched at his horse's jaw, wheeled short round, and fled at full speed.

It seemed to him as if the white shadowy figure swept through the air close to his side, ever with those dark, sorrowful eyes fixed upon him, all that was distinguishable in the white mass of drapery.

Those eyes exerted a singular fascination over him. Try as he would to avert his gaze, something seemed to compel the mad Klamath to turn his face toward them; and every time there was the shadowy white figure sweeping along above the prairie with a smooth, bird-like flight, and the sad, dark eyes meeting his own.

Every time he saw them he turned away with a shudder, and a groan of mortal terror, and dug his heels into his poor horse, to urge him on afresh.

So through the prairie swept the mad Klamath, pursued by the specter of remorse and deserted by his partners in iniquity. Even the savage Modoc, while sharing the spoil, poured

master, the sails of whose ventures whitened all the Northern seas, was spare in form and sickly in appearance. Perhaps the cunning merchant studied too long in the midnight hours how he might get beforehand with his fellows in the trade, and gave to devils calculations the hours that sleep should claim.

It was little wonder that the spare and cunning miser looked with a favorable eye upon the blooming Margaret, sole child of farmer Wilborg.

And now, as they walked along the sanded shore, the man of money-bags pressed his suit.

"Good farmer, remember that times are hard and money worth much; the winter is near and crops are poor," the miser said. "Now see what I will do for thee, if thou canst persuade thy daughter to give me the answer that I seek. I will lend thee a hundred rigsbank dalers outright for a year or more, and charge thee no interest. I will take your daughter without a dowry, and in the way of trade, I will ship your crops wherever you like, at one-half the usual rates. Can I do more?"

"I am quite satisfied," replied the farmer, "but the old saying is, that it takes two to make a bargain, and in this case it will take three. My daughter has a will of her own, and if she be not satisfied, no power on earth can make her wed thee."

"Why should she not be satisfied?" asked the miser, in wonder.

"Thou knowest Christian Arnholt, the fisherman?"

Horsen nodded assent.

"I fear that Margaret has a silly, foolish fancy for the lad."

"But he is but a beggar, so to speak," Horsen exclaimed, in astonishment.

"The sun shines as well upon the smallest boat as upon the largest vessel," answered the farmer, shrewdly. "And who may guess a woman's way? Now, listen to me, neighbor, and I will tell thee nothing but truth. If I should speak of thee to Margaret, and she with the foolish fancy for the lad strong upon her, all the words that ever were spoken or written would not move her a single jot. First, we must dispose of the fisherman. He is to come to-night, to receive an answer from me."

"Send him packing then."

month from to-day, I should be a made man; without them I fear that I am undone. If thou know of a way to get them for me, would thou do so willingly?"

"By Margaret's blue eyes, I swear I would!" cried Christian.

"Hast thou ever heard the legend of Holger, the Dane?"

"Something of it."

"He was once a famous Dane, who lived in the days of the giants. When the hour of dissolution drew nigh, death feared to grapple with the mighty hero, so cast him into a powerful sleep. In the caverns beneath the castle of Kronborg he stays. On each New Year's Eve he wakes for a few seconds, and 'tis said that the mortal who can reach the cavern and change words with the awakened warrior will get vast stores of gold."

"I've heard all this," the fisherman said. "The legend was, too, that should a foreign foe ever invade Denmark, Holger, the Dane, will wake from his sleep and do battle with the intruder. Well, farmer, I'll try the task. I'll take to the sea at once, for it is a good hundred miles from Roskilde harbor to the Sound of Elsinore."

Margaret accompanied her lover to the gate; tears were in her eyes.

"Fear not for me," Christian said. "I am a Sunday child, born on the holy day, and spirits have no power over me."

Then Margaret flew to the stables and returned with a stout iron bar, a yard or more in length.

"Take this weapon," she cried; "my tears have dropped upon it, and that should be a charm against evil things."

Sad was the parting of the lovers, but the end came at last, and the midnight moon shining down upon the tremulous sea, whitened the sail of the fisherman's bark, as it glided northward to the Cattegat.

At twelve o'clock, on the eve of the new year, the fisherman clambered over the rocks below Kronborg Castle, and entered a cavern, dimly illuminated by the rays of the moon. Ten steps in, and he beheld an aged man, with a long white beard, and clad in ancient armor, seated upon a stone, and with his head bowed down upon a table of rock.

have been sighed after and wept over, so I don't know that Nellie Ross was greatly to blame. Many of the village girls would have been proud to get a smile from strong, six-foot John Hanley, with his noble face and manly bearing, and neat dress. For though no one respects a dandy, yet neatness and good taste are as necessary in a gentleman's dress as a lady's, and men can, by their attire, make themselves as attractive or as unattractive as their sisters.

But it was Nellie Ross who received most of young Hanley's attentions. Everybody who they were engaged. But everybody was slightly wrong—there was no engagement, but there was an understanding between them which was sure to lead to an engagement. For John Hanley was no trifler to speak meaningless words or take meaningless liberties, nor was Nellie a heartless coquette, capable of playing with a man's heart, as, alas! so many of her fair sisters can do.

But about two months before Thanksgiving, this pleasant understanding had been rudely interrupted. Nellie, in a thoughtless mood, had dropped a few light words at a party, most inopportunely, at which John's hasty temper had taken offense. Nellie saw that he was wounded, and in her confusion said something to make it worse.

The breach was a very small one at first. John took her home as usual. But you know how such things are—every little trifle helps matters to grow larger. Feeling John's ill-coolness, Nellie grew cold herself, and could not summon courage to tell him she meant nothing.

John, foolish as lovers always are, fancied she wanted to be rid of him, and took this way to bring it about, so he stayed away from her. And after that, Nellie could have died quietly, but she could not make one advance toward reconciliation with John Hanley.

So, upon this Thanksgiving morning, there was a wide breach between them, and a bitter ache in both their hearts. There was one comfort to Nellie—she never doubted John loved her. "He has changed now," she said, "but he did love me, yes, he did once, and I can not help caring for him."

They had both been so quiet that scarcely any one knew there was any change, and they had not been obliged to bear the banterings of their young companions—and that was another comfort.

Of course there was church service Thanksgiving morning—John and Nellie both sung in the choir. And a great many of the young people were invited to a Thanksgiving dinner at Judge McCoy's. Nellie had decided not to go, because she did not care to meet John's company. But she dressed herself tastefully, drew on her pretty gloves, and went to church. John stood on the steps of the hotel as she passed. He lifted his hat and bowed, but Nellie remembered that a short time ago he would have joined her in her walk. Had she known how his heart throbbed at the sight of her, her own would have been lighter as she took her seat in the gallery among the choir.

The church filled rapidly. When John came in, the choir was nearly filled, and he was obliged to sit down upon the end of the seat where Nellie was. And as that seat filled, too, he had to move up, and sit directly beside her as he had not done for a long time.

There were more singers than usual, and many books. John gave his own to some ladies in front of them, and Nellie instantly offered hers. Looking on the same page, they sung the opening piece, "Herein is love," and then listened to the reading of the chapter.

After the reading, the choir rose to sing the Thanksgiving anthem, "Oh, come let us sing unto the Lord," and John and Nellie stood up side by side, and joined their voices in the grand strains of the anthem. It had been a favorite with them; they had sung it together often in Nellie's own home, and a flood of recollections came over their hearts as they struck the familiar chords.

As they closed with the last "Amen," some impulse she could not resist prompted Nellie to look up into John's face. Her eyes met the full gaze of his, with a strange light in their depths. The crimson flashed hotly over her face; she dropped her eyes quickly and sat down trembling like a leaf.

And John? Well, perhaps it was because he felt her tremble close beside him, that John was encouraged to do as he did. No doubt it was very wrong in time of prayer; of course they ought to have been paying attention; but John drew a pencil from his pocket (their heads were bowed on the seat in front, as was the custom), and wrote a few words on the blank leaf of Nellie's hymn-book, putting it into her hand to read.

She glanced at the words: "Nellie, dear girl, I can not endure this estrangement. Will you forgive and forget, and let us be friends again?"

Nellie took the pencil and wrote back: "Willingly, gladly, John."

John shut the book, and then Nellie felt her hand, which lay hidden in the folds of her dress, clasped and pressed close in another warm, strong hand. And like a sensible girl she quietly returned the pressure with her own little fingers.

The good minister's prayer was very long, but it did not seem long to them. Nellie's hand lay in that close clasp until the "Amen," then John released it, and they sat up as quietly as if every drop of blood in their veins was not bounding tumultuously with deep emotion.

"You are going to Judge McCoy's?" asked John, bending down, after service closed.

"Yes, I believe so," answered Nellie, forgetting her determination not to go. But with John walking beside her, it was different, you know.

I have not time to describe the splendid Thanksgiving dinner—every one knows what it would be in so generous a household as Judge McCoy's. After dinner there was music and conversation, and the company gathered in little groups in different rooms. Judge McCoy sent John to the library to look at some new pictures. John went and found the library quite deserted. And then he went instantly back and asked Miss Nellie to come and see the pictures too. Nellie took his arm, but when they were alone in the library, John seemed suddenly to forget the pictures.

He turned and caught Nellie in his arms, and pressing her to his heart, he said:

"Oh, Nellie, my darling! I have suffered so much this long time!"

And Nellie, resting her head against his broad breast, whispered:

"So have I, John."

"Have you? I dared not think so!" he said.

"I want to tell you something," said Nellie, and standing clasped close by John's strong arm, she explained all, telling him what she said meant nothing, and how many times she had tried to tell him so and could not.

"I have acted like a fool. Will you forgive me, dearest?" asked John, bending over her.

She raised her eyes, and—well, you know lovers' always understand each other's ways of showing love and pardon, so I need not write any thing more.

When the next Thanksgiving Day came, she was at church with John again, and they called her Mrs. Hanley.



contempt on the ingratitude of Wahoneta, that had repaid good with evil.

With the rising of the morning sun the scene changes. At the edge of the great Northern Desert, that stretches from Salt Lake to Mt. Shasta, stands a stern, bearded hunter, looking down at an object at his feet.

Sand and rocks are around him, and close to him lies a dying horse, while a second animal at a little distance nibbles a bundle of dry grass laid before him.

But at the hunter's feet lies a horrible sight, the body of a man with a shattered skull, brains and blood spattered over the side of a rock, against which his head rests. It is the body of Wahoneta, the Klamath chief, and the man who looks down on him is none other than Dick Harvey, the one he has so foully wronged.

Spurring wildly on all night, by a strange chance, his horse carried him to the bivouac of the bereaved hunter; and there, falling, threw his rider and dashed out Wahoneta's brains before Dick Harvey's eyes.

Strange Stories.

CHRISTIAN, THE FISHERMAN. A DANISH LEGEND.

BY AGILE PENNE.

On the beach of Roskilde, by the dark green waters of the Cattegat, walked Adam Wilborg, the farmer, and old Hans Horsen, the wealthy ship-owner.

Adam Wilborg was a man of fifty, a small farmer, sadly pinched now and then, and he had much ado to keep the flock of bacon on the wall and the meal-tub well filled. One treasure only had he: a blooming daughter, Margaret, by name, whose cheeks were as red as the hearts on the Danish banner, and whose eyes were as bright as the steel pikes that guarded the royal standard, when Denmark's power carried dismay to the insolent invader.

The farmer, hard-working and poor, ever engaged in a hand-to-hand struggle with grim poverty, was still portly in person and rugged in health, while old Hans Horsen, the rich ship-

The rock, growing with the lapse of time, had inclosed the beard of the ancient Danish warrior.

As the mortal entered, the knight, with a deep yawn, half unclosed his eyes and raised his head; the beard withdrawing from the table split the rock.

"Do they need me yet—is Denmark safe?" he asked.

"All safe, mighty lord," replied the fisherman, trembling in his shoes.

"Good, I may sleep for another year, then; give me your hand."

Tremblingly Christian extended the iron bar, the Dane grasped it, felt the hard surface with satisfaction, and muttered, slowly:

"There are men in Denmark yet," then sunk again to sleep.

Christian hastened from the cavern, and, just as he emerged from it, the rock closed solid behind him.

The bar, where the Dane had grasped it, bore the print of his fingers, and the touch had transformed that part of the iron into gold.

Christian, with the precious bar, arrived at Roskilde. He gave the bar, with the golden end, to the farmer, and Wilborg consented to the fisherman's marriage with his daughter.

The wedding was over, and bride and groom had departed for their home. In the midnight hour the grasping farmer stole up-stairs to look at the bar with the golden end.

Oh, horror! the gold had changed back into iron, and naught but the pressure of Holger's hand remained to prove that he had been visited by Christian, the fisherman.

Nellie's Thanksgiving.

BY MATTIE DYER BRITTS.

Clear, bright and cloudless, with frost-diamonds sparkling and glowing in the early rays of morning, dawned the Thanksgiving Day which was an era in the fresh, young life of pretty Nellie Ross.

She lifted the curtains from her window, before she went down-stairs, and stood bathed in the sunlight which flooded the whole front of the old white house on the highest hill in the village. She gazed thoughtfully out, over the bare meadows, and silver brook, and blue hills far beyond, and a light sigh breathed through her parted lips, as she mused upon the day.

"Ah, yes," thought she, "life, health, hope and friends—I have some things to be thankful for, but—" she sighed again, and floating through her mind came some words of a little poem she had somewhere read:

"My constant thoughts make manifest,
I have not what I love the best,
But I will thank God for the rest."

And with one more sigh pretty Nellie turned from her window and went down stairs.

Some one has said that whenever a man gets into trouble, "she," somehow or somehow, is at the bottom of it. And when a sweet young girl, whose face and whose heart should be all bright and happy, carries a faint, sad look about her brown eyes and her tender mouth, and sighs so often when alone, you will not be wrong if you guess there is a "he" somewhere with something to do in the matter.

Well, much worse he's than John Hanley